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The Week

THE situation in India is dark, but not entirely black, as regards the prospect for a peaceful settlement. The working committee of the Indian National Congress has not yet voted on the proposals which came out of the London conference, and it is not yet certain that they will be rejected. Mr. Gandhi, on being freed from prison, demanded that the other political prisoners, amounting to at least 23,000, be released, and that the violent measures of repression, which have been described in our columns by Mr. H. N. Brailsford, should cease. He also asked an official investigation of these acts of cruelty so that the world might know what has been and is being done. To this request the Viceroy made an unfavorable reply. It has not yet been published, but it is described as "curt and coldly official," and it has strengthened Mr. Gandhi's determination not to put an end for the present to the campaign of civil disobedience. It is quite true that Mr. Gandhi is a difficult man to deal with; he is an extremist, not a practical opportunist, and that is one reason for his extraordinary hold on the masses. But it is also true that every time the British have an opportunity to advance their cause by some genuine act of good will, they miss it and retire behind a barricade of hostile legalism —accompanied, at present, by the most savage repression. If the negotiations break down, and affairs in India get worse, they will be quite as much to blame as the Indians.

AGAIN there is a controversy about the number of the unemployed, arising from the fact that we must rely largely on estimates, and that these estimates are almost invariably so interpreted by administration spokesmen as to make the total seem as small as possible. Colonel Arthur Woods' committee asked the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to make a sampling survey of unemployment in forty-six cities. This it did in December, and reported its results. What this survey indicated as to total unemployment was not made public; no official statement was forthcoming until Congress requested Colonel Woods to testify on the matter. He then stated that government statisticians estimated the total for the country at 5,000,000. But Miss Frances Perkins, Industrial Commissioner of New York State, points out that a reasonable conclusion from the Metropolitan's figures is a total of 7,000,000. The survey found 23.8 percent of the working population out of jobs in the forty-six cities. If we apply this percentage to the whole gainfully employed population of the country, excluding all those in agriculture and unclassified pursuits, and including only manufacturing, mercantile establishments, construction, transportation and the other industrial and commercial occupations, we get about 7,000,000. What do the Metropolitan Life statisticians themselves think about it? Have they made an estimate? If so, why has it not been published?

THE United States has taken the best way out of a bad mess by canceling the trial of Major General Smedley Butler. Washington gossip says that the original order for the trial was the result of pressure by President Hoover, and that the cancellation is also to be attributed to him. There are

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at least four possible reasons for abandoning the trial. The first is that since General Butler believed he was speaking in strict confidence to a small group of men, his offense was less than was at first supposed. The second is that public sympathy has been overwhelmingly with him, and the administration is already unpopular enough without making itself more so. The third is the embarrassing possibility that evidence at the trial might show that the story about Mussolini's display of indifference after running over a child was substantially correct. The fourth is that the administration felt the public agitation would increase ill will between the two countries, and was particularly anxious to avoid this because Italy could so easily upset the naval agreement of London. Whatever the reason or reasons, the decision was a good one. To try anybody for being indiscreet about Mussolini, himself the most indiscreet ruler on earth today, is a spectacle too ridiculous to be permitted.

LAST year Ambassador Sackett, speaking before the International Power Congress in Berlin, called attention to the scandalous spread between the generating cost and the retail price of electric current in the United States. Although Mr. Sackett knew what he was talking about, being a former president of the Louisville Electric Company, Mr. Samuel Insull attempted unsuccessfully to suppress the speech. Now Mr. Morris L. Cooke, a prominent engineer, writes to the journal of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, A. S. M. E. News, calling attention to the remarkable fact that while plenty of technical data are at hand on costs of generation and transmission, "over a period of fifteen years the Meetings Committee of our society has refused to invite, or to accept, papers touching on distribution engineering. . . . Any reference to electrical-distribution costs is taboo. There are 'distribution engineers,' but their lips are mute! No industry, and no branch of industry, can make real progress—socially minded progress—under such conditions." Officials of both the mechanical and electrical-engineering societies confirm Mr. Cooke's finding that there is no reference to the subject in their proceedings. Mr. Cooke himself and others have attempted to estimate distribution costs, but the industry itself has nothing to say. As Governor Gifford Pinchot of Pennsylvania points out in a letter to the president of the A. I. E. E., this lack of data on that part of the process which absorbs by far the greater share of the revenue interferes with intelligent regulation. Will the engineers attempt to fulfill their professional responsibilities in this matter? Or will they continue to be restrained by the fact that exorbitant utility profits are concealed in distribution "costs"?

THE Railway Age has burst out with an almost hysterical objection to the Interstate Commerce Commission's proposal to repeal the recapture clause of the Transportation Act and settle the problem of valuation. The Commission was evidently under the impression that the chief reason why the railroads had been obstructing a practicable valuation procedure was that they were afraid of the recapture of profits above a "reasonable return" on whatever value might be assigned. If The Railway Age represents the considered judgment of railroad executives, this is not true. They object to the Commission's chosen method of valuation even as a basis of rate regulation, and even if, in judging the rate of return, such things are to be considered as allowing the accumulation of surplus in prosperous times to guard against depression, and safeguarding the companies' ability to attract investment. The Commission's method, The Railway Age objects, interferes with the railways' "constitutional rights." If we interpret the O'Fallon decision correctly, these rights require fixing a new valuation for every railroad every time rates are considered, fixing it with an eye not only on investment costs but on spot reproduction costs, and mixing those factors not by any standard formula but according to the circumstances of the case. To do this is clearly an impossible task. It looks as if what the railroads want is to prevent regulation on the basis of valuation from working at all.

THE secret opposition which has been delaying the passage of the Vestal Bill has at last come into the open. After passing the House of Representatives by a large majority, this bill, which provides for a necessary revision of our clumsy copyright laws and for American adherence to the International Copyright Union, has been slumbering in a committee of the Senate, where no serious objections were urged against it. Authors are supporting it enthusiastically; so are publishers and the majority of magazine editors; even the union printers have at last consented to the passage of a bill which does not require domestic manufacture of a foreign book before it is copyrighted. Only the radio broadcasters feel a threat to their pocketbooks. They have come forward with an amendment providing that registration of copyright shall not become effective notice to anyone until three months after it is filed. It would be ridiculous to discuss this amendment on its merits. Since the life of a popular song, when broadcast over the radio, is often less than three months, the National Broadcasters' Association is in effect proposing that popular-music copyrights be abolished entirely. Their amendment has no chance of being adopted; if passed by the Senate it would be rejected by the House in conference; but it may so muddy the waters that the Vestal Bill will lose all chance of passage during the present session of Congress. In that case the broadcasters would profit a little by preserving the present inequitable and confusing conditions of copyright. Everyone else would lose, the authors most of all. For, our present provisional copyright arrangement with foreign countries expires on the first of next August; and unless we

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adhere to the International Copyright Union before that date, the work of American writers and musicians can be pirated all over the world.

OUR national lynching season opened in the month of January with two ghastly examples of mass violence. A Negro in Missouri was burned alive by a mob and a twenty-two-year-old white man was hanged in North Dakota. With this unpromising beginning it is very much to be feared that our lynching record this year will be even more depressing than it was in 1930, when twenty-five men were done to death by mobs. However, it is somewhat encouraging to read the announcement that the organization which Southern women have formed to combat lynching is gaining power and prestige. Last November, at a meeting of twenty-one representative women from the Southeastern states, a plan was outlined for the organization in each state of a committee of women to carry on a vigorous program of education and action for the eradication of mob violence. This plan is now bearing fruit, and organizations of women have been formed recently in Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee. Let us hope that the movement spreads throughout the rest of the South, where lynchings last year were more prevalent than they have been for seven years. For certainly if the women themselves will repudiate the methods which Southern exponents of chivalry so enthusiastically employ to defend women's honor, this form of mass sadism may eventually be relegated to the dark ages where it belongs.

Unfinished Business

NOW THAT a compromise has been reached on drought relief and another is in sight on the cashing of bonus certificates, administration and other conservative forces are beginning to heave sighs of relief because the chances of an extra session of Congress look slimmer. All that remains for Congress to do, it is argued, is to provide in some way the minimum of funds necessary to carry on the government until next December, and then disperse. Why is it assumed that the country wants nothing from its legislative body except inaction? Are national affairs in such perfect order that we should seek as little change as possible for another year?

There has been a vigorous propaganda to the effect that the prime necessity of the moment is to leave business alone, so that it will revive. Anything Congress is likely to do, it is argued, will disturb business, or at least arouse the fears of business men, and this may postpone revival. "This is not the time" to consider new measures, investigations, advances or changes in policy. In so far as Congress plays a part in government, a moratorium on government is demanded. Every question of policy is, for the time being, to be left to the limited powers and vision of the White House.

Just what are the things which Congress might do, if an extra session of that body, as it was constituted by the election of last November, were to come into session on March 1? How would these things disturb business and postpone revival? The most prominent pieces of unfinished business now on the calendar are easily identified. There is the proposal to appropriate a greatly enlarged sum for public works and thus to enable the federal government to help the relief of unemployment and the revival of business to a degree somewhere commensurate with the need. This measure is supported by a large group of the nation's most prominent and scholarly economists. There is Senator Wagner's program to begin the establishment of a permanent system of dealing with unemployment. Only two of his measures—and the most elementary—have been adopted, those calling for better statistical information and advance planning of public works. There remain a nationally coördinated system of employment exchanges, and federal encouragement for state unemployment insurance. This program also has the almost unanimous support of the experts. Senator Norris's plan for public operation of Muscle Shoals, repeatedly adopted by the Senate, languishes because the House will not agree—the principal obstacles being raised by a lame-duck member of the House committee, defeated in the last elections because of his friendship to the power interests—Mr. Reece of Tennessee. Senator Norris's constitutional amendment to avoid the absurdity of such lame-duck activities, long approved by all intelligent commentators, is suspended in the House. The Senate Judiciary Committee's bill to remove the abuse of anti-labor injunctions, supported by the weight of expert authority in this field, awaits action. The Interstate Commerce Commission has asked for power to deal with railroad holding companies and to pursue a more intelligent policy of valuation and rate regulation, which would be made possible by repeal of the recapture clause. The proposal for federal regulation of the interstate activities of the electric utilities is under consideration. And the investigation of banking policy and its effect on speculation, now under way, might lead to action.

There is not the slightest excuse for delay in any of these matters. Those projects which have not already had the benefit of long consideration are supported by the best non-political authority in the nation. They are not half-baked nostrums proceeding from temporary excitement, or from demagogic desire to play politics and win votes. Not one should injure any legitimate business. Some, indeed, are not only urgent, but have been far too long delayed. If they are not passed during a depression, they are not likely ever to be passed. These are the measures for temporary and permanent relief of unemployment. There is barely a trace of reality in the plea that for Congress to act during the next ten months would tend to delay revival of business.

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The only reality there is in this plea is created by the very propaganda against an extra session. Business men have been told so emphatically and so frequently that prosperity and congressional activity are mutually incompatible that they have come to believe it, and this belief itself may undermine any confidence they might otherwise feel, if the Capitol at Washington remains busy. And why have they been told this? A combination of two types of influence has been brought to bear for this purpose.

One consists of predatory, profiteering and reactionary private interests which are opposed to specific pieces of legislation now under consideration. The power companies are afraid of public operation of Muscle Shoals because they think it may succeed and reveal how much they are overcharging the public. The anti-union employers want to block the injunction bill, labor exchanges and unemployment insurance. The railroad holding companies want complete freedom for financial and trading profits. The big taxpayers want to avoid increased expenditures for public works. These interests have done their best to scare the public by pretending that their interests are identical with the public interest. They think that if action can only be postponed long enough, revival may come and the public will be less ready to support progressive measures. Or some new obstacle may be devised.

The other influence is self-seeking politics. The administration, dominated by Mr. Hoover's desire for renomination and reëlection, wants on the one hand to avoid offending the powerful interests mentioned above by sanctioning anything they dislike, and on the other hand to avoid issues which a fight with Congress on these measures would sharpen, and which would make the President still more unpopular with large groups of voters. Wheel-horse politicians and newspapers find it natural to support him and the interests which his position protects. This fear on the administration's side finds its counterpart in a fear among conservative Democrats. They also do not want to offend private interests which are capable of financing campaigns and influencing opinion. And they are afraid that, if they did insist on an extra session and support progressive measures, business might not revive and they would be the scapegoats. They want to enhance their chances of winning the next election by avoiding any responsibility for what happens in the meantime. They want to win, not on their merits, but by the default of their opponents.

Fear is the dominant motive of the bi-partisan coalition which is stifling action in a national emergency, which is preventing the American nation from taking even the most elementary measures to make its business order behave in a barely endurable way. The President, the great Republican and Democratic newspapers, and the sinister forces behind them, are really "trading in human misery." They are telling the country that it cannot have relief from depression unless reaction is allowed to have its way. But those among them who are capable of disinterested thought should reflect on the long-time risks they are taking. How long can our civilization continue to creak along with a governmental machine which is so nearly prevented from functioning?

Our Inconsistent Latin American Policy

MANY PERSONS interested in Latin American affairs have been speculating as to whether the United States were not about to alter its policy toward the southern republics in at least one important particular. Within a few months revolutions have taken place in several South American countries, and the American government has promptly recognized the new governments, despite the fact that they have come into power by force. We have done the same thing in regard to Panama, a Central American republic in which our influence is of course paramount. Ever since the Wilson administration, the United States has shown a pronounced tendency to "withhold recognition," in the popular phrase, from all governments in the Western hemisphere which have overturned their predecessors by force of arms. It was, therefore, only natural that the recent actions of the State Department should seem, to some observers, to suggest a new policy in the making.

These expectations have been definitely killed by Secretary Stimson's recent speech before the Council on Foreign Relations in New York. It is true that the United States will continue to recognize de facto governments in South America, as it has recently been doing; but in regard to the five Central American governments, no change in policy is contemplated. While technically we are not a party to the 1923 treaty, we shall continue to adhere to its second section, which refuses recognition to any government which comes into power by extra-legal means. We shall, so far as can be judged from Mr. Stimson's speech, continue to interpret the Platt Amendment in a similar way, to the discouragement of those patriotic Cubans who are now trying to put an end to the Machado tyranny.

Secretary Stimson defends this policy on both legalistic and moral grounds, but it is the latter which are important. Governments have a cheerful habit of finding that whatever they want to do at any given time is in accord with proper precedents. As a matter of fact, however, Central American recognition policy is of dubious standing in international law, and was so identified by former Chief Justice Taft. It applies to small, weak nations criteria which we would not dream of enforcing against large and powerful ones, and no policy has international standing which is not of universal ap-

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plication. It has become all the more doubtful since the Hoover administration has renounced Mr. Wilson's doctrine of constitutional succession so far as South America is concerned. We now have legality on a strictly geographical basis: what is right south of the Equator is wrong in Central America, except in Panama, where it is again desirable. There could be no clearer admission by our government that it claims a special sphere of influence in a majority of the countries bordering on the Caribbean.

Whether or not we shall recognize any government which may arise in one of these countries is no mere academic question. Our influence is so overwhelming, the potential threat of our forces so great, that as matters stand today no revolutionary government could hope to survive in the face of our disapproval. At the same time, for reasons which are obvious to everyone familiar with Latin American conditions, any regime which is once established is unlikely to be overthrown by the use of the ballot box. He who controls the elections can continue in office, just as he usually can in Philadelphia or Chicago or New York.

What our policy means, therefore, is that we have underwritten all existing governments in Central America. We do this, of course, on the assumption that such governments represent the will of the people; but there is no guarantee that this is the case, or even that conditions may not change so that what was once a good government becomes a bad one. The policy of the United States makes no provision for solving such a problem as this. A cruel and tyrannical dictator who once manages to get into office under the pretext of legality will have the support of the United States, while patriotic men seeking to restore the liberties of the country will not be allowed to do so.

One could ask no better example of the difficulties into which we get ourselves than the recent history of Nicaragua. There our interference has operated, not to prevent war, but to prolong it. At least a hundred American lives, plus a large undetermined number of the lives of Nicaraguans, have been sacrificed since we took over control of the country in order to ensure an honest election. Nicaragua has been saddled against her will with a costly war, to pay for which she is now to be burdened with a new American loan. There is not the slightest evidence that our policy is ensuring a good government in Nicaragua, or preparing that country to conduct its own affairs in an orderly fashion. On the contrary, our policy is one of political pauperization. The puppets dance only when we pull the string and are inert and helpless when we do not. Revolutions, with loss of life, are certainly regrettable; but as Lawrence Dennis recently pointed out in Foreign Affairs, they are not a disease, but the symptom of a disease. Our policy suppresses the symptom, but permits the disease to continue its ravages unchecked. And it may, as in the case of Nicaragua, do so at a cost, in loss of life and interference with the normal occupations of peace time, quite as great as is incurred in revolution.

It is argued in favor of our policy that in the past, some Latin American revolutions have been fomented by private interests in the United States; and that the State Department deserves praise for now making this impossible. Certainly the strictest watch should be kept to prevent a recurrence of any such episodes; but this could be done without going to our present extreme lengths. What is needed is that we should keep our hands off, both officially and privately; and we do not need to fall into the first error in order to avoid the possibility of the second. Secretary Stimson has acted sensibly in throwing the Wilsonian doctrine overboard, so far as South America is concerned. In our judgment, his persistence in maintaining the old policy as regards Central America is as illogical as it is unwise. All the arguments in favor of American interference on the grounds of practicality and expediency have been exploded again and again. The longer we continue in our present course, the more absurd and ineffectual we see it to be. It would be an act of courage and wisdom for the Hoover administration to admit that its predecessors and itself have been mistaken, and inaugurate a new regime of common sense.

Patent Medicine for the Railroads

IF A WRECK a day could kill a rail-consolidation plan, the one recently approved by President Hoover would be on the way to the morgue. At every crossing, it has been derailed by the flagman, not out of hostility, but ineptitude. Not because the plans are opposed to the public interest; it is much too early to arrive at a judgment on them. Many of the wreckers are the President's associates and subordinates. The latest to do damage is W. W. Atterbury, who would benefit as railroad president by the proposed consolidation through his company, the Pennsylvania, and as Republican National Committeeman by Mr. Hoover's program of selling prosperity to the American people on the strength of the rail mergers.

It will be recalled that Mr. Hoover announced these mergers with the appeal, Restore Prosperity; Make More Jobs; Consolidate the Railroads. The link fashioned at the White House between more jobs and rail consolidation was promptly broken by Daniel Willard, railroad president, in admitting that consolidation would decrease rail jobs. This unintended sabotage of the President's cherished program was repaired by two crews, one in the person of Senator Fess, Republican National Committee chairman, and the other Chairman Parker of the House Committee on Interstate Commerce. They advanced the claim that consolidation would help to restore prosperity by releasing construc-

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tion work and would thus provide more employment. But this claim was destroyed by Mr. Atterbury, who said:

> The consolidation is perhaps four or five years in the future. What we need now is better business to give railroads prosperity. Although it is quite possible some railroaders will be put out of work as a result of the consolidation, we will not be facing the present unemployment situation at that time. By then we will be out of our present business depression.

The President's erroneous prediction of a post-consolidation prosperity, based upon miscalculation of the time needed to complete giant mergers, was emphasized by the confession of one of his subordinates that Mr. Hoover and his crew had been fortune-telling too long. Julius Klein, Assistant Secretary of Commerce, known as one of the Hoover Happiness Boys, did not refer specifically to the many presidential predictions, but he said plenty. His words, as broadcast over the radio, were: "Economic crystal-gazing is dangerous, ticklish business. . . . We are suffering these days not only from overproduction, but also from over-prediction."

Mr. Hoover's attempted cure of depression by what Congressman Huddleston called patent medicines may give the rail mergers an undeserved setback. But whatever the disservice done them by the President, he at least refrained from discussing their intrinsic merits in support of his advocacy of the plan. His aides, however, were not content to let bad enough alone. Chairman Parker was sent to the rescue of the President and the plan, and went much farther than his chief. He told the House why the mergers are in the public interest, urging arguments which were advanced in support of the general policy of consolidation by Mr. Hoover as Secretary of Commerce in 1922. Mr. Parker applied to the Eastern consolidations Mr. Hoover's early claim that "anemic" roads would be saved by fusion with stronger companies.

This support for unifications (which should not be confused with another argument of Mr. Parker's about short-line railroads) had suffered obsolescence in the nine years between its use by Secretary Hoover and its reclamation by President Hoover's defender. As Interstate Commerce Commissioner Eastman said in 1929, most of the "weak sisters" for whose sake the consolidation statute was enacted ten years ago have already been joined to lusty railroads. Commissioner McManamy said at the same time that "the weak lines . . . which actually need help can be counted on the fingers of one hand." Had Chairman Parker glanced at the statistics in his prepared statement for the House, he would have observed that the Eastern rail executives propose, not a sheltering polygamy, but the banding together of powerful railroads. The Chesapeake and Ohio is to get the Lehigh Valley, a strong road; vigorous companies such as the Baltimore and Ohio and the Reading, or the New York Central and the Lackawanna, are to be merged. If Mr. Parker had left the justification of the plans to the railroad people, they would have advanced the appropriate facts and principles, and not harmed their cause and the President's policy by raising a bugaboo no longer real, though real enough in the first years of Mr. Hoover's regime in the Department of Commerce.

Congressman Parker used another argument in support of the consolidation, unnecessarily casting still more doubt on a project desired by his leader. He told the House of Representatives that a proposal for small systems, "so much weaker than the three great giants" in Eastern railroad territory, would be "an inadequate solution of the problem." Unfortunately, the Commission records in the earlier consolidation proceedings showed that the smaller Eastern roads were earning better profits than the larger ones. Unfortunately, also, Mr. Klein, the President's same subordinate who deplored overprediction, at the same time deplored oversized businesses. "In recent years," he broadcast to the nation, "many American business men . . . have been crazy about mere size. . . . In the past few days, three prominent executives in as many different lines have told me that the smaller companies in their fields—the ones with lesser overhead, more modest, closely watched cost structure and less pretentious 'front'—have survived the shocks far better than their bigger, more bulging competitors." Similar views have been expressed by several members of the Interstate Commerce Commission. As put by one of them, Eastman, "there are strong grounds for belief that the best results in operating efficiency and service are secured when a railroad system is small enough so that the executive can maintain something like personal contact with the employees all down the line and also with the shippers in the territory served."

Mr. Parker started his "defense of the President" as a solo, but it soon became a two-star talkie, with the New York congressman supplying the pictures, and his Kansas colleague, Mr. Hoch, supplying the words. They did not realize it, but their performance raised the question whether any of the proposed Eastern systems might not be too extended geographically to be efficient. Daniel Willard, president of the Baltimore and Ohio, warned the Senate Committee that a rail executive cannot successfully manage an overextended line. The railroad brotherhoods and one or two members of the Interstate Commerce Commission have officially discussed the problem. It has generally been felt that for Eastern systems the Mississippi River is the Western deadline. President Hoover announced the recent program as one embracing the territory "east of the Mississippi." But Mr. Parker, by his charts, and Mr. Hoch, by his explanations, made it clear that their leader had been misinformed. Two of the four systems are to cross the Mississippi and proceed westward to Kansas City.

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In this connection, official records of the House Committee on Interstate Commerce show that a third of the proposed systems will really extend to Colorado and Texas. The Van Sweringens now control the Missouri Pacific, as well as the Nickel Plate, the Erie, and the Chesapeake and Ohio. Whether the operation of so far-flung and sprawling a system can be made efficient without seven-league boots is a question for the Interstate Commerce Commission. But long before any such problems of the proposed Eastern mergers come up for its consideration, the President's lieutenants have quite unintentionally brought them to the front of the stage.

Before the debate in the House was concluded, another embarrassment was added to Mr. Hoover's consolidation troubles. Mr. Parker, hard pressed by testimony that 80 percent of rail-merger economies take the form of labor lay-offs, resorted to the intimation that organized labor might not "be against this proposal." The remark uncovered one of the skeletons in Mr. Hoover's Cabinet. Less than a year ago William N. Doak, then representing rail workers, appeared before a Senate committee and opposed railroad mergers. Now that he has become Secretary of Labor, is he being drawn in to support the administration program of consolidations, and if he is, has there been any consequent maneuvering among railroad labor officials? The words wrung from Representative Parker in the desperation of debate, be they mere personal surmise or a reflection of activity behind the scenes, have given point to questions of vital import to the rank and file of the railway labor unions, and have burdened the early stages of the consolidation proceedings with issues which applicants for consolidation would have deferred.

Faithful congressmen and railroad presidents have not been the only ones to throw monkey-wrenches into Mr. Hoover's merger machinery. The two principal banking firms behind the Eastern consolidations have now seriously questioned the ability of the Interstate Commerce Commission to effect consolidations in the public interest. Ten months ago, Senators desirous of protecting the public held hearings at which they said to Commissioners, in effect: Though you can determine what kind of merger is good for the public, you cannot order the roads to effect such a merger; you have to wait for them to submit their own plans, and then you must take them or leave them, just as they are. The Commissioners said they could meet the difficulty by imposing conditions upon any mergers they might approve, so as to ensure protection of the public. They know better now.

They got their first lesson from Kuhn Loeb and Company, bankers and reorganizers of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company. The bankers asked the Commission to approve their reorganization of that road. The Commission did so, but added the condition that the payments to the bankers and others, totaling $3,500,000, should be subject to its investigation and regulation. With this permission, the reorganization was completed. Then the bankers rejected the condition attached to the Commission's approval. The conservative majority of the United States Supreme Court sustained their right to disregard the condition. To be sure, the minority members of the Court, speaking through Justice Stone, characterized the bankers' actions as a "failure to conform to elementary standards of fairness and good conscience." This may serve to put the Commission on its guard in considering the applications for Eastern consolidations; for two of those applications will be in the interests of the very bankers who defeated the Commission's efforts to control fees in the St. Paul case.

A few days after the Supreme Court decision, the Commission received a second lesson, this time at the hands of J. P. Morgan and Company, bankers for the other two Eastern systems. They are bankers also for the Great Northern and Northern Pacific roads, which applied for approval of the merger of their lines. The Commission gave its consent and imposed conditions in the interest of the public. Those conditions were not in the interest of the men who controlled the roads. The Morgan firm defeated those conditions in its own way, that is, by withdrawing the application for consolidation.

The real point goes deeper. The bankers have already consolidated control of most of the roads they want. This they did without asking the Commission's consent. That consent, if subsequently given, will not create a consolidation. It will only legalize against future attacks a union which has already been consummated. The Commission can deliver only a title policy, not title, and is thus able to exact as its price much less in the way of safeguards for the public. The recent action of the Morgan firm in the Great Northern merger has brought home the true nature of many of the so-called consolidation applications, and the practical limits of the Commerce Commission's power to trade with the applicants for the protection of the public interest.

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Russia and the World Crisis

The Five Year Plan, Soviet Foreign Relations and the Policy of "Forced Exports"

This is the first of two articles describing present economic conditions in Russia, by William Henry Chamberlain, Moscow correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor and author of "Soviet Russia," published last year. In his second article, Mr. Chamberlain will give a balance sheet for the Five Year Plan.—THE EDITORS.

THE SOVIET UNION is the only large country that has not experienced to a greater or smaller degree such typical symptoms of the world-wide economic depression as unemployment, slackened production and shrinkage of foreign trade. Soviet industrial output increased by 25 percent during the year which ended on October 1, 1930; and, instead of being concerned about the relief of unemployment, the Soviet authorities are worried by the shortage of labor and the migratory tendencies of the workers.

One should not imagine that the economic condition of the Soviet Union is idyllic. The country is paying a heavy price in immediate privation for the future glories of the Five Year Plan. Most of the important foodstuffs and manufactured goods are sold on a meagerly rationed basis in state and coöperative stores and command fantastic prices on the limited private market. Prices of eight or ten rubles (four or five dollars) a pound for butter and four rubles a pound for meat on the private market reflect the shortage, especially if one considers that money wages and salaries (especially the latter) are far below American averages. The news that a store is selling cheap cloth or shoes invariably attracts a host of eager purchasers, pushing, scrambling and struggling to acquire some of the coveted wares before the supply is exhausted.

However, Soviet spokesmen assert, and make effort to communicate this faith to the masses, that these hardships of everyday life are mere "growing pains" which will be outlived when the reorganization of agriculture on a large-scale socialized basis and the industrialization of the country have advanced to a point where appreciable results will be achieved in the field of supply with food, raw material and manufactured articles. The fact that Russia has escaped unemployment and stagnation in industrial production is triumphantly cited as a proof of the superiority of the planned socialist economic system to "capitalist anarchy."

The first instinctive reaction of Soviet public opinion to the world economic crisis was a feeling of self-satisfied vindication. The Wall Street crash and its aftermath in America, the mounting unemployment figures in England and Germany, the signs of unrest in South America and other parts of the world, were regarded as affording fresh evidence that capitalism was treading the primrose path to destruction which Marx had marked out for it: a path of recurring industrial crises, occasionally varied by wars.

Nevertheless, the Soviet Union could not regard the general economic depression merely from the standpoint of a complacently disinterested spectator. Its own interests were sharply affected by the fall in prices. Had this fall been uniform, the balance of Soviet foreign trade would not have been appreciably upset. But, as it happened, commodity prices fell faster and farther than prices of finished products. The Soviet Union began to receive much less for its main exports, oil, lumber, furs, grain. It did not obtain corresponding reductions in the prices which it was obliged to pay for the machinery and equipment which bulk so largely in its purchases on foreign markets.

Now to preserve an even, if not a slightly favorable, balance of foreign trade is a matter of first necessity for the Soviet Union. Exports represent practically its sole means of paying for imports. The Soviets have never been able to float a large foreign loan. The inflow of foreign capital through concessions is so negligible as hardly to be worth reckoning. The receipts from such "invisible exports" as tourist expenditures within the country and remittances from Russians living abroad are small and, in all probability, do not counterbalance the sums which must be paid out in foreign currency for specialists and the chartering of ships.

Consequently, when the prices of most articles of export declined, the Soviet foreign-trade authorities felt obliged to preserve and increase their buying power in foreign markets by pushing up the volume of goods exported. The necessity for increasing exports at a time of depression, falling prices and contracting markets has led up to the question of Soviet "dumping," which has excited so much acrimonious comment abroad.

FORCED EXPORTS NECESSARY

Soviet writers invariably put the word dumping in quotation marks. Various defensive arguments have been advanced against this charge. The columns of foreign-trade journals are scanned for evidence that Rumanian wheat or some other com-

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peting product is being sold somewhere more cheaply than the corresponding Soviet exports. Then it is contended that other countries often sell goods abroad at prices lower than those which prevail on the domestic market. Finally, it is pointed out that the Soviet Union has no alternative; that, if loans and long-term credits are refused, the country can only pay for the foreign supplies essential to the realization of its ambitious plans of industrial development by selling abroad everything it can export at any price it can get.

There can be little doubt that this last circumstance, and not any Machiavellian scheme to disorganize world markets and promote revolution through intensified unemployment, is the real explanation of the Soviet policy of forced exports. If Russia ever reaches the status of a country where efficiently managed industries and large-scale agricultural enterprises yield a huge marketable surplus, it might become a formidable competitor to capitalist countries by hurling this surplus on the world's markets at low prices. But this status lies in a probably remote future. At the present time Russia's exports, especially in the case of food products (with the exception of grain, of which the country has a reasonably adequate internal supply) often represent severe deprivations for the population. These deprivations are justified by the Soviet leaders on the ground that the future security and prosperity of a socialist state can be assured only by the economic independence which, as they argue, is being realized through industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture, processes which in the beginning require heavy sacrifices of material comfort.

The Status of the Ruble

When one attempts to apply to the charges of Soviet dumping the familiar test of comparing prices of Soviet wares abroad with prices on the domestic market, one is obliged to recoil more or less baffled before the fundamental difference between the Soviet currency system and those of most other countries. The dollar and the pound, the franc and the mark, after stabilization, possess strong traits of family resemblance and are freely interchangeable at rates which fluctuate within narrow limits.

The Soviet ruble, on the other hand, is a black sheep among the world's currencies. It is hermetically sealed off from the outside world by laws which forbid its importation or exportation. It is exchanged as a general rule, only in one direction, because, while Soviet banks are glad to give out rubles in exchange for foreign currency at a fixed rate of approximately two rubles to the dollar, they would, except under very special circumstances, turn a deaf ear to the solicitations of any naïve individual, Russian or foreigner, who desired to exchange rubles for foreign currency. The ruble has no buying power outside the Soviet frontiers.

So, if the Soviet government, for instance, wishes to buy ten million dollars' worth of tractors, it must furnish ten million dollars or some acceptable equivalent. Twenty million rubles would not buy the tractors; nor, in fact, would two hundred million. So there is no real basis for the comparison of costs and prices inside Russia and abroad. Since only foreign currency is accepted in payment for imports, it is obvious that the Soviet government may feel itself economically justified in obtaining this currency by selling wares far below the prices which are charged in Russia, if one calculates those prices in terms of the nominal exchange value of the ruble.

The War Against Dumping

While one may not accept the extreme Soviet thesis that protests against dumping represent a new form of agitation for the war against the Soviet Union which is always supposed to be in preparation somewhere, the problem of forced export does present thorny political and economic issues. Increasing Soviet competitive exports of lumber and grain are felt as a depressing factor in neighboring states, such as Poland, Rumania and Finland, and do not improve political relations which were none too good to begin with.

France has taken the lead in imposing discriminatory tariffs against Soviet goods and has tried, without appreciable success thus far, to bring about international action on this question through the agency of the League of Nations. Several agrarian states in eastern Europe have participated in conferences on their common problems at Warsaw and Bucharest; and one of the factors which precipitated the calling of these conferences was unquestionably the appearance of the Soviet Union as a serious competitor on the world grain market.

The Soviet Union has not been slow to strike back. A decree published last autumn instructed Soviet commercial organizations abroad to divert orders and the chartering of ships, so far as possible, away from the countries which discriminate against imports from the Soviet Union. Although this decree thus far is applicable only to France and Belgium, it stands as a warning to countries which have more considerable business dealings with the Soviet Union, such as America, England and Germany. Without underestimating the force of the campaign against Russian exports, the Soviet foreign-trade authorities believe that they can parry its effectiveness by holding up the threat of a complete or partial commercial boycott, which is especially easy to impose because of the Soviet system of foreign-trade monopoly. It is believed that in this period of depression the general need of England, America and Germany to obtain the largest possible share of Russian trade will weigh more strongly than the special interests of those industries which feel the pressure of Soviet competition.

The world economic crisis has brought about political changes everywhere, and not least in Europe. The most important of these changes is

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perhaps the marked growth of extremism, especially of the Fascist variety, in Germany, where the annual reparations tribute sharply aggravates the normal consequences of industrial depression. National tempers tend to become short when times are hard; and one may note especially the deterioration of Franco-Italian and German-Polish relations.

Russia and Europe

Soviet spokesmen for years have been cultivating the idea that "international imperialists" are preparing to pounce on the Soviet Union. Lately this idea has been given more concrete form in the course of the trial of the group of professors and engineers who were charged, on the basis of their own confessions, with maintaining relations with high French military and civil authorities through the medium of influential Russian émigrés in Paris and French agents in Moscow. The Soviet government is also not unmindful of the possible exacerbation of its relations with its immediate neighbors to the west, Poland and Rumania, as a result of its reappearance on the world grain market.

But there are present-day factors in the European political situation which are not disadvantageous, from the standpoint of Soviet diplomacy. One of these is the Franco-Italian antagonism. A common enmity has often proved the basis of understanding between two countries; and this seems to be the explanation for the recent tendency toward *rapprochement* between the Soviet Union and Italy, evidenced in such things as the Italian agreement to finance exports to Russia on a generous basis of state guaranty and the recent rather ostentatious meeting between the Commissar for Foreign Affairs Litvinov, and the Italian Foreign Minister Grandi.

There is no indication that the Italo-Soviet understanding has reached the proportions of an alliance. But it is not unlikely that Mussolini hopes that, in the event of a Franco-Italian war, the Soviet Union would hold France's eastern European allies in check, while Soviet statesmen probably see in Italy a restraining influence on any French adventures in eastern Europe.

The growth of German nationalism, with its anti-French and anti-Polish implications, may also prove indirectly favorable to the Soviet Union. The social order championed by Italian Fascisti and German Nationalists is, of course, very different from that of the Soviet Union. But Soviet leaders have always rather prided themselves on a certain hard-boiled realism in dealing with the infidel capitalist world. Soviet foreign policy today is based on more real and solid factors than the possibility of a Communist coup in western Europe.

So the first indirect effect of the world crisis on the Soviet Union has been a strengthening of faith in the economic system which has escaped the general evils of unemployment and slackened production. The Soviet leaders believe that their country can steer its way through the political and economic difficulties and problems which have arisen in connection with the crisis, partly by tightening the national belt to increase the volume of exports—thereby making up for the lowered price level—partly by exploiting those sharp differences of political and commercial interest which exist between various foreign powers.

William Henry Chamberlain.

Moscow.

Rosalie Evans' Ranch

WE SAW no roadside cross at the spot where Rosalie Evans was killed from ambush, but I cannot testify that none was there. I do not like to think that she is considered less worthy of being remembered than the agrarian leaders, murdered in that same Puebla Valley, whose deathplaces are marked always by crosses, often by heaps of stones, and sometimes by fresh-picked flowers. This does not mean that I admire in the least the purpose which possessed her. I cannot believe that maintaining one's property rights—even in a ranch of 2,700 acres, cultivated by scores of peons and yielding thirty thousand bushels of wheat as its annual harvest—is a fit cause in which to sacrifice one's life. Rosalie Evans believed so. She fought for her Mexican land as single-mindedly as Alexander for possession of the world; she died for it almost like Leonidas.

For six years, unsupported, she held San Pedro Coxtocan in the face of a nation convulsed by an agrarian revolution. She treated with governors, generals and cabinet ministers as an equal. When attacked by land-hungry mobs, she rode them down with her horses, scattered them with her dogs, pursued them with accurate fire from her own rifle. She allowed herself to be made a symbol of foreign aggression; she entangled herself in all the threads of Mexican policy. In her letters she records, brilliantly and blindly, how she caused the withdrawal of a British minister, but that is not all of the story: she came near causing the fall of Obregon's government and the invasion of his country by the United States army. Had the de la Huerta revolution succeeded in 1924, had it received official support from Washington, she would have been responsible in no small part. The revolution failed; her lands were confiscated by the government of Mexico; the government in Washington refused to come to her aid; she was officially an outlaw, and still she clung to her land. Even the peasant leaders, the very ones who were waiting to shoot her from ambush, were afraid in her presence to insult her. They continued to address her politely as "Señora"—not through deceit, for they had made their purpose clear, but out of simple respect for her courage.

As visitors to her deathplace, tourists and Yankees, we drove slowly past the pueblo of Tianguismenalco. Here, in what she called "the bad vil-

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lage," was the home of her murderers. Here Rosalie Evans' buggy stopped on the evening of August 2, 1924, ten minutes after the ambush. The lead mule, seriously wounded, too weak from loss of blood to heed the dogs that nipped at its heels, had fallen in the traces. The German boy who worked on the ranch was wounded, too: he was lying half on the seat, "groaning with pain and bleeding terribly. We thought," said Modesta, one of Mrs. Evans' maids, "that he was dying. And our señora was lying with her body in the buggy, her head hanging down against the hub of the wheel, her hair wound round and round, her scalp half torn away, her forehead cut, her left cheek torn and much blood flowing, her hands hanging out, covered with dust from the road. None could touch her because Brunhilda would not let them come near."

It was because of growling Brunhilda, the black police dog, that the two maids had been summoned from San Pedro Coxtocan. In the village, so Modesta declared in her affidavit, "we saw a multitude of people staring, but they were not afflicted. . . . We took Brunhilda, but we could not lift the señora out because her hair held her. We asked two bad men, Santiago Garcia and Juan Morales, to help us. They turned the wheel backwards and we unwound her hair and took her out of the buggy. . . ." Modesta's language everywhere suggests the faithful servants in Homer. "Early next morning," she concluded, "I went to San Martin and did not leave the señora's side until they took her to Mexico on Monday evening. I tried to climb into the funeral car with her, but the conductor threw me off and she went alone." Modesta returned to San Pedro Coxtocan, "with the dogs, as the Señora had told me to do if they shot her."

We slowly traced back the path which she had taken. At the entrance to the hacienda, our driver stopped: the crumbling arch over the gutter was impassable for motor cars. Leaving him behind, we followed a long avenue of cypress trees, where the soil underfoot was a damp volcanic sand unmarked by wheels; it seemed almost that no vehicle had passed this way since Mrs. Evans last drove on business to San Martin. There was the feel of rain in the air; black clouds were spreading over the peaks of Ixtaccihuatl.

The hacienda itself lies at the meeting place of four straight tree-lined avenues. An old Indian woman, wrapped in a blue *reboso* which hid her features, was standing guard at the door. Yes, this was where the Señora Evans had lived. Yes, the two maids had gone away in sorrow; one of them was married now and one was in America of the North. Yes, she would show us through the buildings and the gardens. They were empty, it is true, but would we be pleased to enter?

Shivering a little from the chill of these damp rooms that slept behind closed shutters, we followed her first through part of the house that was still in repair, then through other rooms burned and left roofless during the de la Huerta revolution, then through a labyrinth of patios separated by high adobe walls. Some of these enclosures were a tangle of roses surrounding silent fountains, some were shaded by eucalyptus and cypress trees so tall and thickly grown that the soil beneath them was always moist, and one at least was an orchard where dry little Mexican apples lay rotting between uneven hills of corn. From another patio, I cannot remember which, we entered the unused chapel, and inspected the place where the spirits of Don Fernando and Doña Monica had wailed over their outraged graves. This hacienda, as Mrs. Evans once wrote to her sister, had everything, even its ancestral ghosts. I began to understand why she had fought for it so bitterly.

Yet the hacienda itself, with its maze of gardens, was not what her enemies coveted. She might have held it till doomsday, for all they cared. What they clutched at for years, what they murdered her for in the end, was the rich land watered by unfailing springs and producing each year its thirty thousand bushels of wheat. When they attacked the hacienda, they were attacking its domination over the fields. When they attempted to destroy it during the revolution of 1924, when they burned these rooms that now stare roofless at the clouds, they were making it uninhabitable so that the owner of the fields could not return. Now that she was gone forever, they left untenanted these buildings that would house a whole village in comfort. They did not steal the tiles from the roof; they did not cut the trees; they hardly bothered to cultivate the gardens. They had their great fields and the water that kept them green during the dry season. The hacienda itself could be left to crumble away in the November rains.

"The shell of a house," said our unsmiling guide. And she added, for she was one of the "good Indians" friendly to Rosalie Evans, "The shell of a life!"

She led us to the roof of the house, a flat space surrounded by waist-high parapets. Here, sometimes alone, sometimes with one or two retainers, Rosalie Evans used to keep watch on the nights when she feared an attack from the agrarians. At first she shot merely to frighten off intruders; she was appalled at the bloodlust in the eyes of the young Texan who watched at her side. Later she, too, became a pure instrument of defense, and her world narrowed to what is visible between the sights of a high-powered rifle.

About the hacienda of San Pedro Coxtocan played all the forces that have shaped Mexican history for the last thirty years. There was the slow oppression of the Diaz government, so friendly to foreign capital, so indifferent to the life or death of the peons: it was this regime that enabled Harry Evans to buy his hacienda. There was the revolution of Madero, gentle and impractical in itself, but a terrible stimulant to all the passions of the people:

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during its brief triumph the Evans family sought a quieter life abroad. There was the reaction that roused their hopes once more, the reaction always defeated in battle and always able to win new adherents among the revolutionists grown fat with success. There was—when Rosalie Evans returned alone—Zapata the good bandit, with his hatred for the wealthy and for the machines that created their wealth. There was the struggle between the xenophobia of the people and the desire of the government for recognition by foreign powers. Finally, underlying everything, was the lust of the peasants for the land they tilled. Mrs. Evans, in holding to her ranch, was opposing the aspiration of a whole people.

Of all this she knew and felt nothing: she lived in the new Mexico as if in the moon. Toward the age of Diaz she looked back nostalgically: it was the time when her husband lived, when Indians were faithful servants, when the great haciendas were owned by Englishmen, by "charming" Spaniards, by the few "good" Mexicans. She had no sympathy for those who revolted against this utopia of leisure and good manners. Zapata was not a mixture of the saint, the simpleton and the butcher: to her he was a bandit pure and simple. Obregon and Calles were bandits and bolsheviks; Manuel Montes was a bandit and a demagogue. None of them recognized the principle for which Rosalie Evans was about to give her life: namely, that the land which her husband had bought with his honest money, which he had watered with springs of his own finding, and which he had legally willed to his widow, should remain hers to profit from, hers in spite of a nation's hunger for land.

She, the woman who often knelt on this tile roof with her rifle resting on the parapet, had never felt that her enemy was anything so abstract as a national ambition. Her enemy was something that confronted her in tangible shapes: now it was a demagogue howling to the mob before her gate, now it was a single sly marauder; now a hundred villagers armed with scythes and rusty shotguns came marching into her fields, now there was a curt note from Obregon confiscating her property. In the end, however, her enemy was a politician, Manuel Montes, who was in himself an unworthy personification of the agrarian movement.

Montes was a minor revolutionary leader elected to the Chamber of Deputies. Originally a supporter of Obregon's, he became more radical as the President himself grew more conservative. He called for the execution of all exploiters of labor; he called for the confiscation of great estates, and he did this quite sincerely; but he also acquired money for himself and, like many other revolutionists, a share in the estates which he helped to confiscate. He was flirting simultaneously with riches and Communism. He was the demagogue whom Rosalie Evans drove from her ranch with a horsewhip; and he was, so the peasants said, the man who ordered her to be shot from ambush. He had followers to execute his orders. Mrs. Evans, by that time, was left to stand alone.

In earlier years, there were Indians glad to work for her, knowing that she was a great lady and one who recognized the great lady's obligation to be generous to her servants. There were officials eager to placate her, in order to win recognition from the United States and preserve friendly relations with Great Britain. There were schemers—not all of them Mexican—who saw in her single-mindedness a tool that would serve their own ends. All these, however, were acting against the nation's will; they were forced to yield. The schemers deserted her; the officials withdrew their protection; the servants were driven off, except for a few women capable of preserving their personal loyalties against the hostility of the group to which they belonged. Rosalie Evans herself was developing the blind courage of those marked for destruction: she defied officials needlessly; she dismissed the young Texan in order that his life might not be sacrificed; she sent away the Federal guard that might at least have saved her person, even if it was ordered not to protect her water rights. In the end, she was left to protect her property with the support only of her maids, her dogs and her own insane determination.

Manuel Montes was never punished for her death, but he died like Rosalie Evans, ambushed by his enemies. He is already being forgotten in the Puebla Valley, where Mrs. Evans herself is becoming a legend. The Mexican government has changed its policy: the great estates will no longer be confiscated and foreign capital is once more welcomed. It is safe for Yankees and tourists like myself to visit the Evans ranch, inspect the bullet-scarred walls of the hacienda, talk with the peasants, visit their schools. The revolution is passing into history. But the plowmen working there in the field where the wheat has just been harvested are figures of the present. They are luckier than other Mexicans: the land is theirs, and the springs that water it, and the wheat that springs from it. God help the rich general, the foreign or native rancher, or the impoverished government that tries to take it away.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

After a Visit with the Elders

In the end I too shall go
With wattled wrinkles to and fro
And look upon the fair of face
As strange and alien in their grace:
But heart, forbid I single out
Susannah for a jealous doubt!
At the last I too shall sit
With painful knees and lagging wit
And listen to the young of mind
As to some antic foreign hind:
But brain, prevent I then should be
Defender of my century!

DOROTHY TYLER.

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The Position of the Progressive

The recent articles by Edmund Wilson and George Soule ("An Appeal to Progressives," The New Republic, January 14, and "Hard-boiled Radicalism," January 21) have stimulated a number of persons not on the staff of The New Republic to comment or reply. Two such statements were published in our issue of February 4, "Americanize America!" by Robert Hallowell, and "Boring from Within," by Kenneth Burke. The third and fourth of the series, by Matthew Josephson and Benjamin Ginzburg, appear below.—THE EDITORS.

III: The Road of Indignation

TO RECALL our attention to the living issues of the time, from more habitual or pleasing matters, is a work that is imperative now and of supreme value. Edmund Wilson, moved largely by moral indignation, has stated his unequivocal view of a program of social change. In a more pragmatic temper, and with a broader, calmer glance at the surrounding realities, George Soule has also taken the pulse of the social transition. Both speak out of a sincere anxiety that is heightened by the present industrial moment. Unless the present is truly a moment of deepening crisis, Soule is on firm ground, desiring to plan, to combine and build on the basis of given conditions toward a collective society. Wilson must have found great relief through explosion; his eloquent tones are those which gain passionate, dogmatic converts. For many reasons I found myself greatly moved by his profession of faith; and at the same time troubled and fascinated by the immediate sequences implicit in this. Honor-bound, you cannot subscribe to a militant faith without going into battle in the next week or the next month. What interests me is how one should give battle.

I remember (looking back at a recent period) how in adolescence those of us who received their education more or less consciously became socialist at heart, foreseeing in the end no other solution for the ills and vexations of the money-making regime. *Homo sapiens* had become *homo economicus* in the last two centuries. But of what avail was even the knowledge of economics if we did not create an economy destined to preserve *homo sapiens?* Then, as prospective men of letters or of professions, we foresaw the most meager stake for ourselves under the heedless capitalist arrangement; so that our interests, quite deterministically, lay behind our indifference and made us secretly or waitingly Marxian. Yet if ninety-eight out of a hundred citizens still assented to the traditional forms, and it was *their* society, tolerably successful at that, we could content ourselves only with enjoying the distracting scene, now and then exercising our feeble pressure through implication, while awaiting a change that would "come up from the grass roots." Not all of us wished as yet to be uninvited "martyrs": or, as successful, practising agitators, to pass a life resembling that of Jesuits.

The New Republic of Herbert Croly had arisen for us some years before, giving expression to a more generous social attitude which was to be realized through peaceful exertions, much like those of the Fabians in England. I have always believed that the intellectual classes combat the profit-making order, not only because of their increasingly small part in it, but also because of the moral nightmares it gives them. The moment you are disinterested, as scientist, artist or teacher, you are hemmed in, jostled and harassed on every side by the stupefying principle that determines the whole environment: buy cheap and sell dear.

But during the last decade the hopeful campaigns of enlightened factions or journals have met defeat on several fronts. Organized labor in the United States, when approached in the orthodox manner, always chose to throw in its lot with capital, as a silent if muscular partner in enterprise. Agrarian discontent, for many reasons, could never be made into a wedge. And then capital itself, through selfish motives, seemed suddenly to be bringing higher standards of life to the masses of people, regarded as chief clients and consumers! We saw a government of supreme strength, rather than one on the verge of collapse; we saw the spectacle of an apparent "sharing of prosperity," so that the Man in the Street *s'en moquait de tout,* with his three meals, his home, his motor car and his instalment credit.

Business leadership seemed not only strong, but more humane and far-sighted than ever before. Little wonder that liberal factions swallowed their grievances for a time and contented themselves, as did The New Republic, with alert criticisms and reservations. Why revolutions, with their inevitable cycles of sheer destruction and want? Did not the going regime fill immense services, productive, distributive, fiduciary, which must somehow be filled? Many of us felt hope in the adventure of "democracy" and "dynamic capitalism." The world outside watched with excitement since 1917 the dual experiment of Russian communism and of mass-production capitalism in America.

II

Now all is changed. We are as an unprepared people, suddenly afflicted. The scene of optimism has shifted magically into one of financial confusion and fear. We seem suddenly to have reverted to a scene of ten years ago: 1921—but worse, to the atmosphere of a half-century back, the predatory, cave-man days of the 1870's and 1880's. Those who have good memories can foresee the several industrial monsters nibbling and mopping up the remains of weaker rivals, generally clearing the ground of all opposing factions. We stare at a spectacle of hypocrisy and cynical indifference and beggary, of private charity and public hunger.

Impatience mounts to anger as the thought burns in us that we have seen this whole shabby parade before, that we are sick to death of this "inevitable cycle," and that we would give everything not to have to go through the whole futile farce again. Everything else we might be doing seems secondary to the business of setting to work at the alteration of our institutions, so that whatever disasters may

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come in the future should at least not be traceable directly to our implicit follies, to the whole brutal and irresponsible pattern of our society.

It is from such a sense of disillusionment and such moral anger, I feel, that Edmund Wilson wrote his "Appeal to Progressives." He expressed the stupor with which one views the return to an abysmal state after so many fair promises from high quarters. He has sounded the deep *malaise* of many factions among us, as the future is seen only "blank" with its prospects of return to old deceptions. He desires a new bill of rights, "new shibboleths" for old, and as shocking as possible. The vision of a thoroughly new state of things is naturally shaped in his mind by the only large-scale experiment of a collective state now going forward: that of Russia. He is for communism, with the ingenious addition that it must be translated into terms of our own situation and taken over from the strange and feeble group that represents the cause here.

George Soule, too, is for collectivism, for "organizing the general welfare"; he speaks powerfully for a "planned society" rather than for an individualist scramble. But on the whole, the paper on "Hard-boiled Radicalism," after Wilson's outspoken plea for communism, is a sharp, clear reminder of all the realities and all the difficulties faced by such a program. The temper of Soule is scientific, experimental, educational, and not swayed by an emotional absolute; his view is broad and realistic, taking in ever so many obscure factors working in the economic body. He reminds us that our capitalism has not followed the development forecast by Marx, and has discovered new phenomena; that "collapse is not imminent"; that revolution must come from "general interest." Pondering over these warnings, we remember that America has a rich heritage of English traditions, and that social change among English-speaking nations has been largely a bloodless and piecemeal process, rather than an advance following the sheer breakdown of ruling classes, as in France and Russia. We remember also the political inertia of the greatest sections of our people, nowadays; the numberless villagers and townspeople of a happy and conservative temper, whose passive influence still predominates in the nation and who detest violent and "foreign" designs. . . . We can never have enough of such realistic spirit as Soule brings. Nevertheless, when wretchedness and fear are very widespread, as they are now, you must come with a perfectly clear and logical message if you would stir the sluggish corpus. Experimental and tentative counsels do not console enough; they do not throw ideas into action. If you merely urge the people to take over water power, but say nothing of food distribution, for instance, they remain confused and hesitant. Besides, the industrial captains suspect and block you just as much as if you proposed the whole bright-red plan. This is the greater logic of Wilson's desire "to go the whole hog."

The restrictions of personal liberties, of individual differences, in a rigorously communist state concern George Soule, as well. I have often felt great fears on this score, but have grown fatalistic. Elsewhere I have written of the increasingly small role allotted to the freedom of the individual in the regimented, standardized economic society we have now. May we not choose between evils? Soule, at any rate, would not bet on capitalism; but he would flee the "odium" of an escape to what he calls a "deceptive utopianism."

A very important issue: *deceptive utopianism?* But was not every hardly won prize of all the hard-bitten campaigners that ever moved through human history a part of the eternal crusade toward utopias? So Moses once led his people over the deserts toward a utopia, and Jesus in turn, and Luther and Rousseau. . . . Even those very men who dared to dream of the peculiar advantages of free capitalism, in a decaying feudal society—were they not somewhat utopian? We are either utopians or complacent cynics. For my part, I am happier as a utopian. The utopia which Wilson urges is essentially that of Marx and Engels. For solid merits, it compares well with the visions of other social and religious seers; as for its vitality, we must admit that it has not ceased to attract many millions of partisans for some eighty years, and is more thriving today then ever. If ever achieved, wholly or in part, it will bear inevitably the revisions of human experience.

Yet if the present period is but a moderate crisis, it is as visionary merely to urge a radical polity as to urge a whole new bible, a new and strange constitution. A glowing body of doctrine, even of dogma, one which has already created its own traditions and won a prestige, in a sense, almost hallowed, is a more valid philosophy of action than is a "piecemeal progressivism." If you seek change, is it not shrewder to menace and lay about, to demand loudly your yard that you may win an inch, or a foot? And among those who favor the collective principle rather than *laissez faire,* is it not better to cease debate over the "color" of their opinions and arrive at solidarity in their operations?

Social revolutions, to be sure, come from general interest. But who can belittle or deny the kind of precipitation which is given to change by the sudden leaping into the fray of powerful public characters? Among many instances of dramatic agents of change, I think of that phase of the eighteenth century when the Catholic Church, declining a little in power, was suddenly set upon by Voltaire with a sustained fury that visibly hastened its downfall as a temporal power.

III

One forcible lesson is brought home by the manifestos of Wilson and Soule: that it is well for us, at once, *to begin constructing and to obtain all possible authority for a clearly articulated program of social change.* Violent revolution may never come here; but a period of high political unrest certainly looms for us; and in such days of fear and crisis and hope, the ideas contained in any clear work of doctrine, any "gospel" lying to hand, picturing the new state longed for, are generally seized upon by the new leadership that bursts into power. Whether in France, modern Russia or seventeenth-century England, the transformation does not establish *all* of utopia, but it invariably throws into action the ruling ideas which had crystallized previously.

Soule gives us the clue when he expresses the deep wish that a change may come over capitalism (as over feudalism), so that it may become "something different . . . a new thing, which we must strive to imagine and picture."

To imagine and picture the new state in all its forms

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seems to me the imperative business of our dissenting thinkers. I should like to see our economists and political philosophers now proceed to paint such a picture in firmest detail and outline. I should like to see them calculate all the possible revisions made necessary in our legal and political code by the socializing of the means of production. There must be new Jacobin societies, I suppose—conferences, schools, organs—all laboring toward unity by suppressing unessential differences among themselves, differences which delight all the hosts of conservatism. But all such discussion and planning, it is objected, all such forecast of imaginary problems and difficulties—will they be anything more than an amateur game of utopia, a splendid tour on a hobbyhorse? Nothing of the sort. Look at the military. A general staff directs endless drills, mock bombardments, sham campaigns, at a colossal public expense—all in preparation for an imaginary and confidently awaited war. When the war comes it is always utterly different in its surprises and exigencies from that for which their strategy prepared them. Do they abandon, for that reason, their perpetual target practice in peace time? The War College is eternally utopian. . . .

We need, of course, most of all, the new manual for society, the new and equally dogmatic "Social Contract," to be constructed by many hands—perhaps by those which have been engaged in endless "fact finding"—out of "Das Kapital" brought up to date by recent experience. We can scarcely overestimate the practical force, the psychological appeal, which such an engine may gather about itself.

IV

Edmund Wilson has well described the feeling of being in a blind alley that grips so many Americans now. "The morale of our society is weak . . . a dreadful apathy, unsureness and discouragement seem to have fallen upon our life." It is at such moments that a bravely dogmatic utterance, an apocalyptic appeal, acts with supreme force.

There are new and more subtle elements of discontent among our people. There are whole new classes which have resulted from the unorthodox working of American capitalism, classes which may best be appealed to through the sense of shame and moral anger, and through the powerful, undeniable need of "escape." The mass-production economy, it has been noted, has tended to produce a large white-collar class, performing divers services, and perhaps, by now, outnumbering even the census of skilled laborers. It is a literate class, which has been receiving a rather wooden education; it is also inarticulate. Prepared in correspondence schools or flabby universities to be pork-packing executives, bond salesmen, press agents, reporters and a thousand other things, this class as a whole had the New Promise of Prosperity dinned into its collective ears. The young men and women of the last decade were told that they had only to show energy and enterprise to share the richest rewards. In reality they passed their days in the most ignominious activities, which they had not the least faith in. Whether they blushed over it or not, they persecuted peaceful families into buying unwanted automobiles, or spread the glory of some moronic wench of the movies throughout the land. In private life great numbers of them suffered pangs of conscience and secretly read Mencken's American Mercury, in order to laugh at the whole hollow farce.

I wonder what many of these White Collars (who may soon be driven to celluloid, and who are growing down at the heel, now that they have been turned into the street) are thinking of? What do they think of the cycle of 1929-1931? At heart—and this was a great weakness—they always despised their work, but consoled themselves with their share of wages. What do they console themselves with now for having done loathsome work so long?

The unorganized, inarticulate class of White Collars offers a new zone of operation for the advocates of social change. A great part of this class must be conscious enough to feel the tragic sense of a decent heritage, somewhere lost. It is but one of the great classes that, I feel, may be successfully reached by the method of moral indignation. Thwarted, repressed, overcome with its inferiority, it is almost a perfect case for the Freudian, who is never far removed from the Marxist.

The communist ideal, as Wilson has seen, must be translated into terms of the native, American situation. Far from shunning propaganda we must use it more nobly, more skillfully than our predecessors, and speak through it in the local language and slogans. The idea of "Service" has never seemed wrong in itself; we have suffered largely for the great want of this Christian principle, and for the mockery made of it. Nor do the notions of "drives" or "team spirit," typically American and used toward communal or concerted ends, seem less susceptible of a decent function. The whole aspect of American life in the last decade, under mass-production capitalism, has been intensely gregarious, uniform, herdlike, marked by a vast standardization of human needs and movements. The question of finally consecrating this character of uniformity, through grafting upon it the inspiring collective principle, is one of new tactics and interpretations. The driving power, as in all great social adventures, must come from the high quantity of moral certainty and moral passion.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

IV: Against Messianism

THE ORIENTATION of liberalism has been discussed by Messrs. Wilson and Soule almost exclusively in terms of politico-economic programs. But the issues involved go far beyond specific programs of social reform: they raise the whole question of the philosophic, one might almost say spiritual, orientation of the intellectual-liberal group in America. This comes out clearly if we read Mr. Wilson's article as a psychological document. Mr. Wilson finds himself poignantly dissatisfied, as indeed we all are, with the cultural tone of American life today, with its utter aimlessness and lack of values. As he says, "what we have lost is, it may be, not merely our way in the economic labyrinth, but our conviction of the value of what we are doing." Surely, one might reply, if we have lost our sense of values, we cannot find it by betting on some plan of economic or political action; it is rather by clarifying our sense of values that we ensure intelligent political action.

In Mr. Soule's article, too, although it is devoted almost

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entirely to economics and politics, there is to be found an implicit recognition of the underlying cultural and intellectual issues. "The progressives," he writes in his concluding paragraph, "ought not to be satisfied with the recommendation of specific programs or pieces of economic and social machinery, but should also strive to forge the human values which alone can give these devices validity. And, in addition to creating a clearer vision of the purposes in view, they ought to redouble their efforts to learn and to stimulate social learning."

What both these editors of The New Republic recognize more or less implicitly I should like to put at the forefront of the discussion. What is the relation of political action to cultural and intellectual values? This is a question that concerns all men, but it has a special practical importance for those readers of The New Republic who are at once interested in politics and in the cultivation of intellectual values.

Because politics and economics are concerned with the physical conditions of our existence, and these hem in our thought and our activity on all sides, there is a natural temptation to set up a program of politico-economic reform as logically prior to everything else. There is a temptation not only to visualize such a program objectively as a panacea for all human ills, but also to transform it subjectively into a sort of personal salvation. One associates with the realization of the program one's emotions, one's happiness, one's faith in life. As against this, the true sense of values is compelled to reverse the perspective. Instead of staking individual freedom entirely on a realization of political reform, a realization which is necessarily in the future and necessarily contingent, it starts with the affirmation of moral and intellectual freedom in the present and makes the goal of political effort the extension of the range of freedom in the future.

The difference between the two points of view may appear to be merely psychological, yet it involves the whole springs of our activity and our whole outlook on reality. The one point of view leads to messianism, a religion which stakes everything on the hope of the future and which is compelled continually to read its hope into the future in order to support its faith in present action. The other leads to a rational critical religion which relies entirely on its sense of values in the present and not upon the turn of events in the future. The one ends up with a subjective interpretation of reality in its very attempt to be ultra-realistic; the other can afford to be realistic because of its supreme idealism. Or, to put it briefly, the one makes politics a religion, the other makes politics a consequence of a critical consciousness.

For professional intellectuals the messianic inversion of values leads to a depreciation of their intellectual crafts in favor of a mysticism of social action. Pragmatism, the socialist and communist subjections of philosophy, literature and the arts to the social problem—these are all expressions of social messianism among intellectuals. Naturally they bring with them, by way of reaction, the "ivory tower" and "art for art's sake" conceptions, which seek to tear intellectual and artistic activity free from all reference to social reality. I should be greatly surprised if in the present discussion Mr. Wilson's advocacy of integral socialism will not bring forth a number of rejoinders to the effect that the place of the artist is in the studio and not in the social arena.

But both of these opposite points of view spring from a failure to understand the true hierarchization of values in social life. Our intellectual and cultural activities do not need any justification or criticism in terms of political dogmas or social policies. The only criticism of which they properly admit is in terms of their own immanent standards, and perhaps also in terms of an ultimate unification of all human activity—which is, however, far from identical with the standard of political or economic doctrine. Autonomous as these activities are, there is none the less a real connection between them and practical social reform. But the connection is just the opposite of the type that is usually put forward. It is analogous to the connection between mathematics and physics, or between science as a whole and technology. Mathematics is not carried on for the sake of physics, nor science for the sake of technology, but they represent in each case the advance guard of intellection, whence radiate values that become incorporated in the disciplines behind. So, too, do the intellectual and cultural activities form the cradle of values, from which emerge the forces of spiritual generosity, freedom and disinterestedness that become crystallized, however slowly, in politics. In a halting way this truth is recognized in the case of science, which thus enjoys a special charter of autonomy, but is not recognized for any of the other intellectual or plastic arts. These must still justify their existence before the politically minded censor.

II

The discussion between Messrs. Wilson and Soule seems to turn on the question of integral socialism or communism versus piecemeal radicalism or progressivism, but from the point of view here outlined, the debate needs to be turned upside down. It is necessary first to demessianize the rival conceptions before we are in a position to weigh them as political programs. Mr. Soule has detected a trace of messianism, or, as he calls it, utopianism, in Mr. Wilson's advocacy of communism. But this trait is found not only in Mr. Wilson's program but also in Marxian socialism and, willy-nilly, even in Mr. Soule's radicalism. It is found in every outlook which sets up social reform as prior to intellectual faith and political action as prior to cultural activity.

The old New Republic progressivism, of which Mr. Soule's program is an attempt at restatement, had a good share of this messianism. The messianism came in through its alliance with the philosophy of pragmatism, and is to be contrasted with the more obvious messianism of Marxian socialism, against which Croly's liberalism grew up as a reaction.

It is characteristic of Marxian socialism that it does not rest the demand for the socialization of industry on moral and intellectual grounds, but falls back upon a philosophy of history—the myth of a universal cataclysm which will inevitably bring about the reign of socialism. Socialism is bound to happen, and because it is bound to happen we must carry on a revolutionary propaganda for its attainment! So stated, the contradiction is obvious, but the contradiction proceeds from the psychological necessity of justi-

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fying the belief in socialism once it is divorced from all reference to moral values and set up as an end in itself. What better way is there of justifying socialism under such conditions than to claim that reality itself is on your side and that the course of events is bound to bring it about in any case? With this belief in the physical inevitability of socialism there also goes a doctrinaire dogmatism, which attempts to judge all culture and all values in reference to the class struggle and the socialistic philosophy of history. (In Russia today even science is not exempt, and such a thing as the quantum theory must needs be tied up with dialectical materialism!)

The doctrinaire character of the Marxian gospel stands out most clearly when set up against a background of American ideas and conditions. It is not to be wondered, therefore, that those who were interested in social reform should start out on more realistic premises than those of the orthodox Socialist party. But in attemping to be more realistic than Marxian, the progressivism constituted by the New Republic group fell into an inverse messianism. It attempted far too much to identify itself with the realities of American life, with the American masses, to the point of losing touch with the source of its own values. Mr. Wilson alludes to Herbert Croly's increasing skepticism of politics in his last years, and this skepticism argues an initial messianism with regard to political reform in America.

If we keep in mind the fact that the liberals in America are primarily intellectuals by profession and training, one cannot help wondering whether the preoccupation of intellectuals with political questions is not a pathological reaction to the peculiar cultural conditions existing in America. In no country of the world is there such a tremendous gap between the values recognized by intellectuals and the values that actually govern political and economic realities. And yet in no country is the intellectual so preoccupied with affecting the course of politics to the exclusion of his intellectual interests. The less power he has of determining conditions, the more passionate, it would seem, is his will-o'-the-wisp quest of political influence.

It is here that the philosophy of pragmatism is most revealing. Pragmatism has been wrongly called the philosophy of the practical man. It represents rather the anti-intellectualism of the American intellectual, who is overawed by the practical sweep of American life.

III

Take away the rival myths of pragmatic Americanism and Marxian class struggle, and the issue between Mr. Soule and Mr. Wilson breaks up of itself. For radicalism of the pragmatic type it is necessary to derive one's faith from an acceptance of American life. One must therefore never mention the word socialism, inasmuch as the American people will not hear of socialism and the intellectual might lose his sense of communion with the masses if he independently envisaged a thoroughgoing ideal of socialization. On the other hand, for Marxism one must not merely envisage socialism as a regulative ideal, but one must take it as an absolute dogma, as a religion in terms of which everything else is to be judged. The true intellectual refuses to choose between these myths and rests his conception of political action on intellectual faith and intellectual values. From his point of view it is absurd not to envisage—and with a fair degree of clarity—an integral program of socialism, when such a program was already developed more than two thousand years ago by such a philosopher as Plato as a direct consequence of the intellectualist vision of ideal values. There is nothing utopian in socialism, except the fact that it has not been tried, and indeed, as a French thinker has recently remarked, Western civilization has paid the price for treating as chimeras the three practical programs which Plato propounded—namely, socialism, feminism and eugenics.

The intellectual does not abandon his belief in socialism simply because it has not been realized and because there is no immediate prospect of its complete realization. He knows that it is not any inherent impracticability, but only the inertia of men, that stands in the way. Nevertheless, because he derives his springs of action and his faith in life not from any psychological guarantee of the correspondence of his ideals and immediate reality, but from the source of all values in and behind his intellectual conscience, he can afford to be patient. He can afford to be opportunist, approaching experience with ideals and principles, applying them according to the needs of the situation and even modifying them if his intellectual conscience so dictates.

But even more important than the clarification of political and social ideals is the cultivation of a cultural-intellectual conscience whence these values derive. If our analysis has been correct, American intellectuals have been guilty of an excessive diversion of their energy into political channels. But a proper husbanding and direction of spiritual forces under present conditions would dictate a complete reversal of this bias—it would dictate throwing in more energy than ordinarily in the direction of cultural and intellectual activity as distinct from political propaganda.

That our cultural and intellectual values are at a low ebb, even among intellectuals, few will deny. Intellectuals too often put the blame on the mob, on democracy, on the machine age—anywhere but on themselves. It is always easier to put the blame on external conditions than to go ahead of conditions and crystallize them in the direction of cultural values. But American intellectuals—if they would only take advantage of it—really possess more power over cultural conditions than over the political realities to which they attribute their lack of cultural accomplishment.

From an emotional point of view, it may seem almost criminal and morally cowardly, at a time when there are eight or ten million unemployed and perhaps hundreds of thousands starving, to advocate a policy of rational intellectualism. And yet is any other policy possible or feasible for those to whom this is addressed? It is a policy, we must remember, that does not refuse to recognize any valid claim on one's action—it only asks that all action be intelligent, and that at the same time we keep alive the hearth fires of intellectual values, without which intelligent action becomes impossible.

If the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted?

BENJAMIN GINZBURG.

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Washington Notes

The Floundering Democrats—Playing into Republican Hands—Our Undefended President—The Extra Session

BY THE time this is printed, some form of compromise may have been reached between the President and the Democratic-Progressive coalition over relief appropriations, but at the present moment the prospect is not encouraging. In fact, there seems a fine chance that the controversy will be intensified by the introduction of the adjusted cash-compensation proposal for the veterans. There is no disguising the fact that the Democrats are not happy about it. Here they had an ideal situation in which the split in the Republican party, the dislike of Mr. Hoover among the regulars, the disgust with his treatment of the Wickersham report, his loss of prestige and popularity and the general deplorable condition of business, all played into their hands. Clearly the sound political strategy was to widen the breach, encourage internal dissension among the Republicans and avoid responsibility.

The Democratic ultimatum of last week, demanding the enactment of six relief bills carrying appropriations totaling $48,000,000, under threat of holding up the general appropriation bills and forcing the special session, was in direct conflict with this idea. The result seems to have been to gain for the much harried Mr. Hoover journalistic and business support and to weaken the Democrats as a party with the elements which its so-called leaders were so anxious to conciliate. They have placed Mr. Hoover in the position of protecting the government finances from demoralizing raids and standing against a policy to which, rightly or wrongly, is attached the obnoxious word "dole."

When you consider the general popular disposition to side with the President in any quarrel with the Senate, and the plain impossibility of the Democrats forcing their program through, it is not easy to understand their wisdom. The restlessness of the Senators who joined in the ultimatum comes from two causes. One is that they think the party as a whole has been forced into a weak position by the local situation in Arkansas, the home state of Joe Robinson, the Democratic floor leader. And they think that the hot fire which his violent colleague, Mr. Caraway —who has been for weeks in a highly inflamed state over Arkansas conditions—built under him, drove Senator Robinson farther than he would otherwise have gone.

The other reason for Democratic discontent with the party position is the pounding they have received from leading Democratic papers in New York, principally The World, which argues that if they persist they will accomplish the miracle of restoring Republican morale. The Democratic hope now is that a turn in affairs before the end comes will enable them to get off the thin ice and back into the sound position from which they were hammering Mr. Hoover without damaging their own prospects. I shall not be surprised if they succeed in this because of the obstinacy of the Great Engineer.

Though I think it clear that public as well as journalistic sentiment favors the President not only on the question of "principle," which he has raised in reference to relief appropriations, but also in his desire to avoid an extra session, it also seems clear that what the public really wants and expects is a compromise. How he will feel a week from now no one knows, but those on most intimate terms with him report no disposition to compromise at present.

It is interesting, too, that Mr. Hoover's resentment toward his party leadership in the Senate for failing to defend him from the Democratic and insurgent attack is deeper now than before. In the last session there was always Henry Allen, who could be relied upon to defend the President, but in this session there is no one at all. Assault after assault of the most virulent and violent kind is permitted to go by utterly without reply. Reed, Moses, Bingham, Watson and Smoot sit silently in their chairs while the oratorical javelins are being thrown. Silent, also, sit the Young Turks, from whom practically nothing has been heard during this session. It does seem as if there would be at least one person articulate and loyal enough to constitute himself a White House defender. One thing, I think, that deters them is their inability to cope in debate with the opponents of the administration, who practically have a monopoly of the speaking talent in the Senate. An excuse that is offered is that to answer these attacks upon Mr. Hoover is to waste the Senate's time, delay the passage of the appropriation bills and increase the chances of an extra session.

Some of this may be true, and from the extremely violent assaults a favorable rather than unfavorable popular reaction occurs. None the less, the complete lack of anything like whole-hearted defense of the President by his party followers naturally creates the impression that he has no real party support and that the regulars go along with him sullenly and because they have to—not because they believe in him, like him or want him to succeed. Moreover, so far as a good many of them are concerned, this happens to be correct. And that Mr. Hoover is angry as well as aggrieved about this lack of support is, I think, beyond dispute.

Altogether, things are in a general mess as the session draws to its close, with neither party in a happy frame of mind and the President feeling badly treated by both. Only a clairvoyant can possibly tell now whether the "continuing resolution," which is the only way the extra session can be avoided, will pass or not. Nor will they be able to tell until the final day of the session. It can be put through in less than twenty-four hours, but there is certainly doubt that it will be. Despite the fact that not a single appropriation bill has yet passed, that the confusion next week will be worse than this, and that there now seems no way of reconciling the differences between the Senate majority and Mr. Hoover, I am inclined to think it still possible to escape the special session; in fact, the chances are a little better than even that it will be avoided. The ability of the Senate to untangle itself and enact needed legislation, even when the impasse seems complete, the public sentiment against an extra session, and the knowledge that all politics is compromise and that controversies such as this are seldom won by either side, form the basis for my conviction.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Noel Coward, Camille, Etc.

THE POST-CHRISTMAS crop of shows seems to me to have been rather unusually good. Even Eva Le Gallienne's "Camille," which did not sound very promising, is worth seeing.

Miss Le Gallienne has a marvelous make-up, which makes her look very French, nineteenth-century and pretty. She is particularly good in the first act, where Camille is most worldly and most coquettish. After that, as the heroine's sorrows begin, Miss Le Gallienne drops her first-act vivacity and falls back into that natural way of talking of hers, flat, matter-of-fact and slightly tart, which inappropriately suggests Ruth Chatterton rather than any possible loving Parisian *cocotte*. I was disappointed, too, when she leaned over backwards in the last act trying not to exploit Camille's cough. In fact, she never coughed at all but put her handkerchief to her mouth once or twice, and one felt one wasn't getting one's money's worth. Yet the performance as a whole, in spite of its long, old-fashioned and sometimes rather dull conversations, like most of Miss Le Gallienne's productions, gave you more than your money's worth—according to the standard of uptown theaters. She is still the most intelligent producer in New York and produces the most interesting plays.

The best recent plays, however, are comedies. I have already mentioned "The Affairs of Anatol" and want to recommend it again to those who have never seen it. It was a great mistake to cast Schildkraut as Anatol—he can do nothing with Anatol's naïveté and charm and plays the whole role with a sort of military rigidity and woodenness. But Walter Connolly is excellent as Max, and the women are good—particularly Miriam Hopkins and Patricia Collinge. The comedy itself makes the best of our American comedies—even "Strictly Dishonorable"—look like an inferior grade of goods.

Noel Coward's "Private Lives," too, is better than any American light comedy I have seen lately—though Coward has his own kind of flimsiness and cheapness. Noel Coward is a talent of just about the same rank as Sacha Guitry. Like Guitry, he has wit, a sense of dialogue, some imagination, a touch of sentiment—and like Guitry, he is actor, dramatist and director—a jack-of-all-trades and a showman, who can contrive a smart comedy, a halfway serious play, a period operetta or a revue, and whose prime concern is putting things over and pleasing people. "Private Lives" is a smart comedy with one sentimental musical-comedy song called "Some Day I'll Find You" composed by Mr. Coward himself and thrown in to make sure of any suckers who mightn't fall for the cleverness of the dialogue without a dose of something to make them a little boozy. This dialogue is extremely funny, and the play is perfectly staged and acted by Mr. Coward and Gertrude Lawrence. A husband and wife who have been divorced and remarried meet on their wedding trips and, reviving their old romance, run away together. The second act consists entirely of a long scene between the pair in which, in the course of a single evening, they run through the whole repertoire of their reactions to one another: they begin full of quiet affection, dance to the phonograph on the strength of a couple of brandies, gradually get on each other's nerves and hurt each other's feelings and end by breaking the furniture and falling on the floor in a battle to the death. This act, which has a good deal of psychological truth, is the best thing by Noel Coward I have ever seen; and "Private Lives" is the best entertainment that I have found in the theater this season.

Lynn Riggs's "Green Grow the Lilacs," put on by the Theatre Guild, is also primarily an agreeable comedy—though it has moments of melodrama. It is Indian Territory cowboy life done in water color and quite naturally and charmingly done. Lynn Riggs writes well—he has humor and poetry, and his first act at any rate shows considerable dramatic imagination. He uses most effectively a device of having two shots heard off-stage in one scene and then showing in the following scene the conversation which has led up to them. In the second act, however, one is surprised and disappointed to find that these incidents don't lead to anything in particular: the hero simply marries the girl and the "obstacle" (as the people who teach playwriting say) which the author provides through the intervention of the villain is too perfunctory, not merely to deceive us, but even to hold our interest. Even the frailer parts of the play, however, are pleasantly enlivened and filled in by the singing of old cowboy songs—there is a round of them between every two scenes and they are continually cropping up in the action. The principals—June Walker, Helen Westley, Franchot Tone and Richard Hale—all play with persuasiveness and delicacy. Cleon Throckmorton has managed to handle the rather complicated scenery, which is always being shifted and which has to show both the inside and the outside of the farm buildings as in "Desire under the Elms," with novelty, ingenuity and beauty. The whole thing makes a very amiable evening.

"As You Desire Me," by Pirandello, makes an evening somewhat less agreeable. I have never been able to believe in Pirandello and since seeing this latest play I believe in him as little as ever. (I confess that this and "Six Characters" are the only plays of his I have ever seen.) All there is, it seems to me, in Pirandello, is Proust's idea of the relativistic character of human personality and behavior without any of Proust's poetry, emotion or capacity for creating character. "As You Desire Me" is about a night-club dancer, the mistress of a German roué, who gets a chance to pass herself off as the vanished wife of a worthy and idealistic Italian. The idea is that the loose-living dancer really has stifled within her the personality of a pure and devoted woman, and that when the opportunity offers, when people believe her to be that woman, she is actually able to become the person whom the husband has loved, idealized and remembered. In the end, the real wife, with credentials of identification which the masquerading dancer cannot produce, is brought back, stupidly and mutely insane. The husband and his family, who have come to love the false wife, are unwilling to believe that she is not genuine; but Lena knows that they will always doubt her and that this will make her doubt herself in her new role, and she goes away for ever.

The situation itself does not sound bad—but in Pirandello's hands it is mechanical and dull. So far as I can see, all that Pirandello does is take some situation of this kind which points the moral that what people are is only what they think about themselves and what other people

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think about them, and rig it up as a melodrama. He seems to have no real imagination for character: his people are simple Italian puppets—with less animation and color than Italian puppets usually have. What business does a dramatist have dealing with the metaphysical subtleties of human conduct who presents everything more or less in simple terms of good and bad? The roué in "As You Desire Me" is as tiresomely corrupt and dastardly a scoundrel as has ever been seen on the stage—he is *more* tiresome, because he is merely a property for performing Pirandello's parlor trick; and the good and innocent Italian lady in her beautiful and wholesome villa whom Lena wants to turn herself into—in spite of Judith Anderson's struggles to make her human—is another toy, a double handkerchief that changes from red to green, out of the same amateur magic box.

EDMUND WILSON.

Stark Young, The New Republic's dramatic critic, is spending the next few months in Italy, where he will lecture, under the auspices of the Westinghouse Foundation, in universities and before philosophical societies. During his absence, dramatic reviews will be contributed by several other members of The New Republic staff.—THE EDITORS.

The Two Stravinskys

THE PRESENTATION of the Stravinsky "Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra," and "Symphonie de Psaumes" at a recent concert in Boston under Koussevitzky, was a revelation. Something besides two new pieces by the most ingenious of living composers was discovered, and much that was even more pleasing than these representative works. There in Symphony Hall, it was apparent that the man was dual, and two Stravinskys existed: a fact immensely joyful to all concerned for the great future of music.

Previously, there had been merely a single Stravinsky; and that one, something of a disappointment. He had begun so brilliantly, with a way of saying new things which had gradually become a way of saying relatively little with conspicuous elegance. There was genuine momentum in his first keen works, "Petrushka" and "Le Sacre du Printemps." Here, his medium forged tones of a new hardness, stridency and brusqueness, novel iterative acrobatic rhythms worked up into great mechanistic concepts of the world and pictures of dominant instinct. Though these images were not lofty, they were at the very least relative to their time and to the hard-boiled young composer. The music required the footlights, true. But it was wonderful dance music, superb in color and in daring oppositions of various sonorities, rhythms and tonalities.

There was momentum, still, in the compositions immediately following the two stirring ballets: "Renard," the "Concertino," "L'histoire du Soldat," "Les Noces" and the "Symphonies for Wind Instruments." Besides, these pieces were decidedly symphonic. Their textures were more uniform than those of "Petrushka" and "Le Sacre." The ideas involved were purer, too; the transitions, gradual. Contrapuntal forms were effectively applied; and the thorough humility of the material, the rigidity of manner and the light opposition of orchestral masses, realized an interesting anti-Wagnerian ideal. Yet, a thinning of invention was evident. Bald patches occurred in "Renard" and "L'histoire"; and one heard rhythm and color too exclusively in "Les Noces." The final effect of the latter work, masterpiece of this period, was of a string of folk songs.

But in the youngest, post-war group of Stravinsky's pieces, there was more superinduction than momentum, more artificiality than matter. Apparently, a classical ideal was in process of realization. The opera "Mavra," the opera-oratorio "Oedipus Rex," the ballets "Apollon Musagetes" and "Le Baiser de la Fée," were as little descriptive as the frankly absolute "Piano Concerto" and "Octuor," piano sonata and serenade. All the works enacted a certain objectivity, dryness, urbanity, extraneousness. Keen pages were not lacking; the apotheosis of "Apollon," the chorale in the "Octuor," some of the choruses and set airs of "Oedipus." The mass of the music, none the less, was curiously second hand and uncreative. The material was a bewildering farrago of Bach, Handel, Stravinsky, Viennese waltz, Russian folk song, jazz and the kitchen range; and while many persons claimed to find the sheer composition of this material compensatory for its mongrelism, others found the art essentially trivial, and much ado about nothing. If most of these pieces moved, it was merely because they were divested of all weight and content. Certainly, one has to search far in the literature of ambitious music to find something as impotent as the "development" of the Tchaikovsky melody quoted in the absurd apotheosis of "Le Baiser de la Fée." Little wonder that one came to look upon Stravinsky as a potential second Berlioz, threatening to deteriorate from a performance perhaps greater than the unhappy Frenchman's into a sterility quite as lamentable as his.

The experience in Boston did not reverse this judgment of Stravinsky's neo-classic works. The "Capriccio," in fact, was too similar to them to do anything but strengthen the picture of a decadence. At that, it is easily one of the happiest of Stravinsky's eclectic compositions, as entertaining and agreeable to the ear as the best of them, the "Octuor." Still, all the familiar inferiorities are present. The "Capriccio" is no adventure in tone, no movement toward a living form for what exists today. The material has no procreancy, concocted as it is of jazz, Bach, Viennese waltz and Schumanniana. Doubtless the clever piece fulfills a social function, and pretends to nothing more. It is a *divertissement,* the successful result of a desire to combine the whimsicality of spirit and sparkle of the old brilliant salon music with the scintillance of jazz: an invocation to gayety, a grandiose parlor ornament. Melodies of a Schumann-like delicacy speed along among light sonorities; the orchestration is almost that of chamber music. One feels oneself among the lusters and *décolletés* of an early Victorian drawing room, savoring again the charm and elegance of pre-bourgeois manners. But the invention in the light products of that happy period is lacking; hence, it does not quite rank with such minor masterpieces as the Schumann quintet or the "Fledermaus"; amusing as it is.

But the other new piece, the "Symphonie de Psaumes," on verses from the Vulgate, affirmed the earlier picture. It is not only the livest piece Stravinsky has produced since the "Symphonies for Wind Instruments." It is the old

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Stravinsky: of the robust blood of the big ballets towering like red girders in the sky of impressionistic music. It is the old orgiastic, barbaric brother, even though the fashionable, Thomistic dedication" To the Glory of God" suggests the unhappy Johnny-on-the-spot "modernity" of the neo-classic things. The rhythms are pulsating, brusque, exciting. The tone quality is high, penetrating, shrill: piccolos, brass, drums, in boldest combinations. The thematic substance and the melodic line are strong and individual, of a piece with the rigid, monotonous, strangely pleasing material of "Renard" and "Les Noces." A certain priestly aristocracy controls the music, perhaps in harmony with its devotional character. But not a tinselly paste one; and there is no farrago of Bach and Clementi. The work is affecting both in the choruses and the interludes, which so bewildered the Boston critics; though the second section may be as inferior to the other two as they averred it. Whether the symphony is the equal of "Les Noces" and "Le Sacre" we cannot say. Perhaps not: it appears a little thinner than these, to be ranged with "Renard" and "L'histoire" and the "Symphonies for Wind Instruments." The communication of new aural and emotional experience is none the less positive. There is nothing fortuitous in the fact that the verses given the chorus are taken from the Twenty-eighth, the Thirty-ninth and the One Hundred and Fiftieth Psalms. The music indeed is a gush of waters in the waste land, the end of a barren period; and called for such words.

So the existence of two Stravinskys was revealed. There was no longer one, who had declined. Nor was there one who declined and then picked himself up again. There was an important Stravinsky, and a secondary one. The first was an artist moved by a great idea, part given him by his medium, part by feeling. The other was a very clever and oftentimes talented musician, unclear in feeling and swayed by currents of esthetic opinion—the contriver of a sort of museum music built of the stylistic idiosyncrasies of other composers. And it is only men of the type of the first who compel our allegiance. They find the form of the dizzy present. They do not strive for immortality. . . . It is nice to have Stravinsky clear again. PAUL ROSENFELD.

CORRESPONDENCE

A Run for His Money

SIR: In line with their merchandising policy of producing the kind of news the credulous yap public wants and laps up and believes, I read with amusement the attempts of our metropolitan press to emphasize and magnify the so-called Communistic efforts to cause runs on banks. . . . I think if all the Communists in the country came to New York and went from door to door, their efforts would be nil as compared with the . . . telephone calls from half a dozen or more of the important bank-stock brokers who are conversant with one's interest in certain bank stocks, urging the sale of this bank stock for reasons vaguely stated. . . . Or the efforts of the minor officers, in their desire to get accounts for their own institutions, speaking disparagingly of the standing of a competitive institution.

So, I repeat, why magnify the importance of the Bolshevik? Why flatter him by laying at his door a power and ability far beyond his ken?

New York City. "A VICTIMIZED BANK STOCKHOLDER."

A Testimonial Dinner

SIR: Ten years of persistent, laborious, many times heartbreaking effort have gone into the building of Brookwood Labor College. Today, after these ten years of selfless devotion to an idea, that of workers' education, Brookwood stands more secure than ever—and stands as a monument to the labor of one outstanding figure, A. J. Muste.

No others can realize as fully as the men and women who were fortunate to spend some time at Brookwood as students what Brookwood means to the labor movement and what A. J. Muste means to Brookwood. To give expression to this realization the Brookwood graduates of New York City are tendering a dinner to A. J. Muste on Brookwood's tenth anniversary.

Hosts of people in every avenue of progressive activity have at one time or another been benefited by the assistance, advice and personal interest of A. J. Muste. We are sure they will now be anxious to join the Brookwood graduates in a demonstration of their appreciation for the idea for which he stands and in tendering their admiration for the idealist whose energy, devotion and courage have given form and substance to the idea.

The dinner will be held on Friday evening, March 6, at the Woodstock Hotel, 127 West Forty-third Street, at 6:30 o'clock. The price per plate is two dollars. There will be no collection. Orders for tickets should be sent to the Testimonial Dinner Committee, Room 2004, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

ISRAEL MUFSON,
New York City. Treasurer, Dinner Committee.

Retort Courteous

SIR: From a book note on my novel "Midsummer Night" in your issue of December 31, I have just learned the unexpected news that the novel does not justify "one-tenth of the ballyhoo there is about it." As I don't read any Eastern newspapers, and very few others, and no magazines except The New Republic, which a young American friend and I peruse each week from cover to cover—the news that such ballyhoo exists came to me as a complete surprise. To thank you might sound flippant and insincere; but I honestly appreciate this unusual service that—besides the pleasure I derive from your more serious kind of criticism—was thus accorded me by your distinguished journal.

Fresno, Calif. CARL WILHELMSON.

Wright and the Chicago Fair

SIR: Lewis Mumford slashed with the sharp weapon of sarcasm in his article, "Two Chicago Fairs," published in The New Republic of January 21. Those familiar with his less impassioned style will realize that in this critique he is shaming the perpetrators of an imminent and drastic mistake. In the 1893 World's Fair a fake Roman masonry architecture was created of wood lath and plaster! The model of necromancy was established in ancient glamor. American architecture has been saturated with style-conscious tricks ever since. In 1933 "modernistic" hocus-pocus will again make buildings take heavy masonry shapes, but they are to be built of light-weight steel frames and covered with thin fabricated insulating boards! An artistic aberration!

Frank Wright said very recently that the purpose and opportunity of such expositions from the architectural point of view is experimentation in methods of construction, study of the expression that is inherent in modern building devices. In the American manner, ingenuity has already been applied to the materials of construction of the 1933 Fair. But, American-wise, the old flimflam magicians are at it again, "the habit of superposition," architectural atavism.

Lewis Mumford is profoundly right—the greatest of publicity spotlights is placed on such an exposition and its "artistic" effects will be myriad and lasting. America needs its greatest architect for this job. It needs Frank Wright, "the little group of willful men" notwithstanding.

New York City. HERBERT LIPPMANN.

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An Outline of All Life

The Science of Life, by H. G. Wells, Julian Huxley and G. P. Wells. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 2 vols. 1,478 pages. $10.

THOSE who have sensed a presumption of omniscience in past works of H. G. Wells will sense it more strongly than ever in this newest offering, longer than "The Outline of History," and having the ambitious purpose "to describe life . . . to tell what is surely known about it, and discuss what is suggested about it, and to draw just as much practical wisdom as possible from the account." Surely to undertake the writing of a "précis of biological knowledge" demands sturdy self-confidence. But it is the opinion of this reviewer that the confidence was for the most part well placed.

The three authors of "The Science of Life"—in which Mr. Wells had the biologist Julian Huxley and his own son G. P. Wells, a scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, as his able collaborators—have been successful in their attempt to write an integrated popular account of the biological sciences. Their "strenuous effort to be clear, complete and correct" has yielded a book that is lucid if not brilliant in style, more inclusive and detailed than the ordinary outline and certainly accurate and up-to-date in those parts that deal with material familiar to the reviewer. There is plenty of "big thinking," to be sure, but no roaming in interstellar space; there are no fanciful interpretations of the past, no rash prognostications for the future. Where facts are not sufficient to explain, opinions are ventured; but they are faithfully labeled. Paths are cut through controversial materials with admirable disinterestedness and, where a choice is made, the reader is usually aware that there are other views. Although specific footnote references do not abound, there is general mention of the work and writings of many investigators. Cross-references, so necessary where the same facts are examined from different angles in different parts of the text, are painstakingly given. Many technical terms are clearly and intelligently translated into the mother tongue, and many unfamiliar phenomena are made real for the general reader by an apt use of homely metaphors and similes.

Now that nearly every field of knowledge is being "humanized," with those fields naturally rich in human interest being humanized again and again, the manner of presentation becomes an important measure of excellence. Any adequate professor can select the salient concepts of his special subject and present them clearly and correctly. Few can write an effective outline, because sound scholarship alone is insufficient. Only the scholar who is also an artist succeeds.

Most writers of popular outlines find themselves impaled on one horn or the other of a dilemma: they either succumb to their learning and write over the heads of their lay audience, or, aware that the interest of the general reader is subject to sudden collapse, they "write down." The authors of "The Science of Life" were aware of this dilemma, but they did not succeed in escaping it. At the very beginning of Book One, the wordy expatiation on the lives of Mr. Everyman and Mr. Everymouse is an elaboration of the obvious that would bore an eighth-grade student. Similar puerilities occur in other places; a large portion of Book Seven is exclusively devoted to them. On the other hand, there are concepts, such as that of the mechanism of inheritance, which no degree of clear and vivid exposition can make understandable and interesting unless the reader is willing to do some hard thinking. Obviously "The Science of Life" was written with one eye on the Mr. Everyman so frequently referred to in its pages. But this gentleman, who has never exhibited any marked avidity for intellectual conquests, will probably feel obliged to skip through large portions of the work—the portions that will seem most worth while to the intellectually curious. It is doubtful whether enough twaddle remains to justify in Mr. Everyman's mind the expenditure of ten dollars, even though he may hope that through the expenditure his tastes will be elevated.

If T. H. Huxley may be held to have influenced the genes of a grandson or the thought processes of an illustrious student, it is remarkable that he communicated so much of his acumen and so little of his wit. It is true that an occasional good joke breaks the monotony of exposition, but humor in "The Science of Life" is introduced without subtlety. Clarity, imagination, felicitous choice and arrangement of materials are there, but seldom any charm of expression. The authors may object that this is a very small defect in a book of this type. Yet to read a chapter from T. H. Huxley, or even from J. J. Thomson or William Beebe, will convince a discriminating reader that purely literary excellences of style—wit, beauty of word and cadence, deftness in the choice and turn of expression—add much to the discussion of a scientific theme. Illustrations, too, may be beautiful as well as lucid. The 339 line drawings in "The Science of Life" are, with a few exceptions, clear and of considerable educative value. Yet they are on a lower plane of execution than the illustrations in a good textbook of zoölogy. To suggest a comparison with the superb illustrations in Thomson's "Outline of Science" would be unkind.

Every book has its faults and it would be decidedly unfair, in this case, to overemphasize them. "The Science of Life" is the most complete general account of the biological sciences in print—honestly and ably presented. Although it is inconceivable that any given reader will find all of it interesting or valuable to him, there is much that almost anyone can read with entertainment and profit.

The work, in two volumes, is divided into nine books, dealing first with human anatomy and physiology, then successively with systematic biology, the evidence for organic evolution, the theories to explain it, historical geology and paleontology, ecology, hygiene and pathology, the biology and psychology of behavior, and finally the peculiarities of man as a species. The compass of this review does not allow a summarization of all the concepts treated in the course of these nine long books. In general, a mass of interesting details is piled high on the base of orthodox biological doctrine.

The cornerstone of this doctrine is, of course, evolution. The cause of the variations that underlie the mechanics of evolution is still a mystery, yet it is the habit of many modern biologists to think of these variations as occurring at random. Natural selection, sifting and directing blind variations with an obvious mechanical purposelessness, creates a world of creatures "as much the automatic product of outer forces as mountains, lakes and valleys." But variations may only seem to occur at random. Behind them, in some still unexplored recess of the chromosome, an explanation may be lurking. Until this is found, it is just as reasonable to believe that the mind of a divine Being is working there as to assume that nothing but chance, whatever that may be, is pulling the strings. To be more exact, it is just as *unreasonable* to believe the one as the other of these views. Our ignorance makes it silly to believe either.

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Although our authors see little future for God on a scientific earth, they are encouraging about man. They discern some purpose behind the antics of humanity, a purpose that has risen as a by-product of variation and selection. Through consciousness we may hope for a faster and better method of evolution. Even now the human species is changing rapidly and deliberately. The speed of transportation and communication will continue to increase. The economic life of the species will blend into one system. Traditionalism and war, though still threats, may be expected to die. Knowledge and power will increase. Eugenics may eventually learn enough to be useful; surgeons may even be able to operate on the germ plasm and deliver offspring to specification. "Mightier experiences and joys" await the race to come. But here the authors as biologists wisely bring their book to a close.

JOHN HODGDON BRADLEY, JR.

Toward a Planned Society

The Menace of Overproduction, Its Cause, Extent and Cure. Edited by Scoville Hamlin. New York: John Wiley and Sons. 202 pages. $2.75.

Our Economic Morality, by Harry F. Ward. New York: The Macmillan Company. 323 pages. $1.75.

AMERICAN industry, by not taking thought, has added far too many cubits to its stature—has in fact developed a severe case of elephantiasis. The seventeen business men, bankers, statisticians and economists who contribute to Mr. Hamlin's symposium are agreed about this. And they disagree almost frantically with our engineer President, who, in his last message to Congress, wrote: "Competition is not only the basis of protection to the consumer, but is the incentive to progress."

Competition, in the view of these distinguished dissenters, is the Devil who has squandered and continues to squander our natural resources of land, coal, oil and metals; who has burdened every one of our basic industries with excess plant capacity; who forces almost half of the corporations of the United States to operate at a deficit; who mocks the desperation of our millions of workless, foodless, clotheless, shelterless men and women with the truly diabolical paradox: "You have produced too much of all these things. For that sin you must now go hungry and go cold."

Stuart Chase writes a foreword to this symposium. Among its contributors are the presidents of the National Coal Association, the Wool Institute and the Silk Association of America; the executive director of the American Institute of Steel Construction; Sir Henry Deterding, managing director of the Royal Dutch Shell Companies; Mr. Francis H. Sisson, vice president of the Guaranty Trust Company; Dr. O. E. Baker, senior agricultural economist of the United States Department of Agriculture; Mr. Henry Chalmers, chief of the Division of Foreign Tariffs of the United States Department of Commerce. Some of them recognize the sickness of our acquisitive society as frankly as do most radicals; they describe expertly the symptoms of this sickness and much of their testimony is valuable. But confronted with a critical problem of social mechanics on the solution of which depends the life or death of our civilization, they are obliged, in the nature of things, to think and write opportunistically, rather than with the rigor of a scientist. The medium is too difficult.

These experts are not irresponsible Christian Socialists like Harry Ward. They hold positions of onerous responsibility with relation to a complex system of vested interests. At the moment, they can afford to be highly vocal, even impassioned, in chasing the sacred cow of *laissez faire* competition out of our economic pasture. But the wild bull of property stamps and glares almost unchallenged. Almost, but not quite. Dr. Virgil Jordan, economist of the McGraw-Hill Company, permits himself this muttered aside: "It is hard to see why anybody should suffer from having too much in a world where a good deal of want is found everywhere at all times. But in this society in which serving human needs is still secondary and incidental to making money, feast and famine are constant companions, or always close on each other's heels."

Dr. Jordan then proceeds to demonstrate that mergers and consolidations have not proved and are not likely to prove a cure-all for excess capacity, overproduction or cut-throat competition. The effect of such concentrations, he points out, is to protect and maintain the unsuccessful marginal independents who are absorbed. The end result is to bring new marginal producers into the field. In challenging this sort of inadequate "rationalization," Dr. Jordan appears to be in substantial agreement with J. A. Hobson, recognizing that the crucial problem is the distribution of purchasing power instead of feeding profits back into plant investment, either directly or indirectly through the reinvestment of income.

Most of Mr. Hamlin's contributors are prepared to scrap or sharply limit the principle of competition. Mr. Hamlin himself is prepared to go farther and scrap the principle of profits, substituting therefor a rather elaborate scheme by which both capital and labor function as wage earners, their incomes being regulated by their respective contributions to production. The details of this scheme are respectfully submitted to the experts. Laymen, like the writer, will perhaps be more interested in Mr. Hamlin's admission that "Some nations do not distinguish any economy in the ownership of private property. They will very likely design their control for government use." Indeed, this would seem vastly simpler, especially since Mr. Hamlin's scheme would demand a vast amount of statistical and accounting control by government agencies, which corporation executives, secure in the principle of private ownership, would find little difficulty in sabotaging.

So much for the gospel according to the experts. Why is it that when one turns to Harry Ward, who is not an expert at all, but merely a clergyman who has been conspicuously off the reservation for many years, one feels that his world is both more real and, yes, less sentimental? Is it possible that the pointer readings of the experts are less expressive of the actual dynamics of human society than Mr. Ward's synthesis of Christian idealism and economic function? In rejecting the sentimentalization of private property and insisting upon the functional reality of a social ethos, Mr. Ward seems, to the writer at least, to think more like an engineer and less like a preacher than the experts. Furthermore, his blueprint of a functional society seems less Goldbergian than, for example, that of Mr. Hamlin.

The writer is, of course, quite prepared to be told that neither he nor Mr. Ward has any business on the premises. To this the retort is obvious: historically, revolutionary thought is both the product of laymen and profoundly ethical. And revolutionary action is initiated and carried through not by economic men but by human beings. The experts are right in assuming that the acquisitive society will not resign; nor can they be expected to admit its bankruptcy. Mr. Ward is right in predicting that the acquisitive society will die, like all the other acquisitive societies

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of history, because "such a system must finally be without brains or blood."

Since Mr. Ward is the most distinguished representative in our generation of the Christian Socialist philosophy, the trend of his thought is probably familiar to most readers. In his present volume he exposes again the fatuousness of the orthodox economists' attempt to divorce ethics and economics and the fallacy of defining "human nature" as an absolute instead of a changing resultant of social conditioning. Mr. Hamlin's experts confess the failure of the price system by inference; Mr. Ward, using practically the same evidence, attacks it directly for its failure "to deliver sufficient purchasing power at the bottom of society to keep itself going."

Mr. Ward is secretary of the Methodist Federation for Social Service and is prominent in the activities of the Federal Council of Churches. Since, by his own admission, the church tends to share the spiritual bankruptcy of our acquisitive society, it is into such secular activities that the residual religious energy of Protestantism is flowing. It is interesting to reflect that something similar happened in Russia during the two decades preceding 1917, when most of the genuine religionists left the shell of the church and went underground to lay the ethical and ideological foundations of the Revolution. As a result, in Russia today one does not have to listen to talk about the "economic man"; nor about overproduction and unemployment.

JAMES RORTY.

The Reign of Terror

The Age of Hate: Andrew Johnson and the Radicals, by George Fort Milton. New York: Coward-McCann. 787 pages. $5.

THERE are moments, in this distinguished narrative, when the reader is convinced that English was not the native speech of the author, and that Theodore Dreiser was his model in the art of presenting evidence. Mr. Milton writes, as Dreiser does, with a sort of half-literate power. He has much of that novelist's genius for building up a clumsily moving scene. At a given moment, there is the appearance of indiscriminate detail, but at the end of a chapter all the facts move powerfully into place. I am approaching "The Age of Hate" with the assumption that works of history should be works of art. I do not know whether Mr. Milton acknowledges this doctrine; it sounds frivolous; historians are not known to take it seriously. For art is pretty, and historians deal with facts. Yet in most respects this book is a work of art. The author's grasp of his material, his sense of historical values as these are embodied in the lives of men—a sense closely allied to the novelist's dramatic insight—molds the work into a coherent whole, into a single action, which never falters from the first to the seven hundred and eighty-seventh page.

Of all the recent works on the Reconstruction (there are too many to name) this is the most minutely documented, the most skillfully arranged. By keeping Andrew Johnson steadily in the foreground as a dramatic figure, Mr. Milton is able to marshal a wealth of detail that Bowers, Winston and Stryker lacked the method to use. There is not a single event in the ex-tailor's stormy presidency that Mr. Milton does not throw a new light on, simply by telling it in richer detail than any of his predecessors have done. Mr. Milton's gift, however, is not historical in the conventional sense; it is dramatic. The two political principles that clashed in Johnson's administration are nowhere argued to a decisive statement that would exhibit with some show of political philosophy the author's own views. These principles are personal forces dramatically hostile or friendly to the hero, who is the President. It is for that reason that this volume, the most moving in our Reconstruction literature, takes a distinguished place without replacing any previous works.

It does not replace a work like Professor Beale's "The Critical Year"; in fact, "The Age of Hate" is a little mystifying without Beale's explanation of the economic forces of the time. Milton has given us a narrative of the Thucydidean order, which shows us what happened as pure fact. Winston and Stryker use enough fact to point up the clash of political viewpoints: from Mr. Milton's treatment we are barely able to infer that coherent political doctrines were in the air, for they are relentlessly reduced to the terms of personality, intrigue, ambition.

This is the secret of Mr. Milton's power. By personalizing the struggle of Johnson and the Radicals, he makes Johnson the protagonist possessed of a single tragic fault, procrastination, and Congress the evil, indifferent world of contingency into which the hero's flaw betrays him. The most striking feature of the book, a quality which no other work of American history that I know possesses, is its closed atmosphere. It is a complete world; it amply testifies to a fine sense of artistic form. This is not achieved in the usual way, by tampering with the evidence, for the author is scrupulous to the last degree, but by concentrating every particle of evidence on the personal fortunes of Andrew Johnson.

The political philosophy of the author is obscured by his fidelity to the narrative. Perhaps he found himself in a dilemma. Should he go into abstract discussions of political issues, and clog up his story, or should he choose rather to leave his loyalty to Johnson's cause unexplained? He has done the latter: for although Mr. Milton is a "Conservative Unionist," that position in 1865 had no political reality whatever; in 1861 it had as much chance to survive as Bell and Everett proved that they had. As an avenue of approach to modern politics in the South, it seems doctrinaire and sterile, or at best a rhetorical screen hiding the failure to make up one's mind. Now it is obvious, of course, that Johnson was a great and disinterested man, and that the Radicals were scoundrels. But suppose the scoundrels had stood for sound political doctrine? Mr. Milton says nothing to prove that they did not, beyond hinting that their belief in centralized government is distasteful to him. It almost seems as if Mr. Milton's choice of party after the death of Lincoln were dictated by Johnson's superiority, say, to Ben Wade. The truth is, I believe, that Mr. Milton is one of those Southerners who are eager to prove that the South never went out of the Union at all: the War between the States is a bad dream. As a view taken after the fact, in repentance, it cannot be refuted; neither can the colors red and green. But for a Southern man to extend this attitude to his emotions, and to speak of Civil War politicians from Maine, Michigan, Ohio, as if they were his own "people" is, in a writer so able as Mr. Milton, an inexplicable lapse of taste.

Perhaps Mr. Milton should be notified that Southerners no longer have to repudiate secession in order to be esteemed when they go to the North. The real trouble with Mr. Milton's political outlook is that of nine out of ten historians—he hasn't any. Lack of insight and conviction, in a well documented book, is lost in detachment and objectivity. The economic motives of the Radicals he dismisses with casual references to their support of Big Business, just

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growing big, and to the pay they got for their support. One is thus at a loss to explain the author's wrath against them, unless their wickedness lay in merely opposing the hero, Andrew Johnson. So far as one can see, the sole political reason that Mr. Milton can find for regretting the Reconstruction—apart from the grief, sorrow and suffering—is the creation of the perverse Solid South. Evidently, it is a good thing to have two parties, just to have them—to say so is certainly an act of disinterestedness—whether either party stands for any political reality or not. "The Age of Hate" is one of the great narratives of our historical literature, but intellectually it is muddled, and thus unsound.

ALLEN TATE.

Mr. Nathan's Testament

Testament of a Critic, by George Jean Nathan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 257 pages. $2.50.

NOW THAT Mr. Nathan *nel mezzo del cammin* offers us his testament with portrait bust in bronze reproduced on the dust cover; now that there exist scholarly exegeses of his work by Messrs. Vladimir Kozlenko and Isaac Goldberg, Ph.D.; now that the complete roster of that work ominously approaches the proportions of a Collected Edition, one is impelled to halt and inquire, ever so reverently, just what it is all about.

At first blush the table of contents of the present book promises much toward an answer: "Revelation," "Proverbs," "Chronicles," "Lamentations." The naïve hope is that the author is going to break down and confess everything. But before many paragraphs one is made aware that here again is the old familiar Nathan style, distilled down a bit to an almost Baconian sententiousness, aphorized out of all pity to make a Phelpsian holiday. Before ever we enter upon the threshold of that Drama which Mr. Nathan guards with his formidable adjectives, we are set right on such matters as happiness, egotism, marriage, money and the nature of truth. Mr. Nathan does them up in neat little bundles that have all the compressed inevitability of a two-line joke from Judge. The method adopted is any process of dissociation that allows the writer to arrive at some conclusion to an idea in any respect different from the one commonly held. "There is not an idea which does not include its own possible refutation, nor a word, the contrary word," remarked Proust in "Albertine Disparue"—with a weariness that did not permit him to go on. Mr. Nathan does go on, for the rest of his book, making dissociations that seldom have any more validity than their effectiveness as a wisecrack disguised as an epigram. Is the subject the New Humanists? Their motives were really quite transparent. Down-at-the-heels young men, chiefly college instructors, they glared enviously at the fat plenty of men like Dreiser, Cabell and Ludwig Lewisohn. The whole movement becomes clear when we picture Mr. Gorham Munson looking in at the window of the room in Baltimore where Mr. Mencken plays his Viennese waltzes and sips his magnum of Niersteiner.

But this happens to be the testament of a dramatic critic, and accordingly references to the titles of plays and their authors are not infrequent. One whole section is given over to a rapid-motion drill parade of all the dramatists of any note who have appeared in this country in the last twenty years. All these dramatists with the exception of Eugene O'Neill are so many pins that Mr. Nathan bowls over with his long strong arm. They are rather so many names rattled off with brief reprimand by some hurried and irate sergeant major. For the New Playwrights group, which included such dissimilar talents as Michael Gold and John Dos Passos, the command is brief and unconditional: Dismissed. If one knows nothing of this group, such a criticism is too arbitrary to be really helpful; if one does know something about it, the absence of discrimination is annoying. Now and then one is rewarded by a remark that implies a solid knowledge of dramaturgy and an ability to weigh the ideological assumptions of a drama. But on the whole the survey reveals no more than this critic's almost total reliance on cataloguing for emphasis, his fondness for declamation and his habit of unsubstantiated generalization. All these traits derive from the theory, stated early in the book, that the only worth-while criticism is destructive criticism. Here is room for inquiry. By destructive criticism Mr. Nathan means destruction clearly enough, but does he mean criticism? When a household has smallpox the doctor does truly tack a card on the door reading "Smallpox." But is the critic's function not a little different from that of the doctor? And does not the proper exercise of that function call for the use of some more revelatory expletives than junk, tripe, claptrap, rubbish and hocus-pocus?

The difficulty is that the sole alternative recognized by Mr. Nathan is an excess of praise that is equally as far from criticism as his own special brand of annihilation. The difficulty is that he has mistaken "favorable" criticism for constructive criticism. The function of the critic, of the authentic critic, has never been to pass arbitrary judgments of good or bad. On what ultimately would such judgments be founded? Either on a set body of canons, which Mr. Nathan would himself be the first to deny, or on the vacillations of personal taste, which have no better authority than the particular sensibility of the writer at a particular moment. Of the two possible views Mr. Nathan's is apparently nearer the first; his writing is the adventures of his soul among masterpieces, or at least nightmares; his allegiance is with the sage of the Cyrenaic academy. As in philosophical outlook he is a professed hedonist, so in criticism he is concerned only with the partly emotional, partly intellectual satisfactions of his ego. The question now is whether hedonism is the proper state of mind for a critic.

Everything does in the end rest on the sensibility; but sensibility can express itself, as it has first refined itself, only through the analytical powers of the intelligence. The real function of the critic, his true "constructive" merit, consists in the revelation in intelligible terms of what he has experienced—in the theater, of all that he has seen and heard. There can be no relaxation of his intelligence as a critic any more than there can be any lessening of his response as a spectator. It is only in this way that the critic has his role, that he justifies himself to those who turn to him for illumination, guidance or simple information. Because richness of sensibility and fine intelligence are so seldom allied, there are perhaps not more than two or three dramatic critics in America who even partially fulfill the role—and Mr. Nathan is notably not one of them.

In the absence of intelligible analysis, Mr. Nathan has given us erudition (nomenclature) and a style which is compounded largely of a cataloguing of the latter and of the names of Central European beverages in the original. There is also his undoubted polemical vigor, an attribute more pertinent to the journalist than to the critic, who is necessarily too occupied with his object to be distracted by such outside matters as censorship, prohibition and happiness.

WILLIAM TROY.

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Book Notes

Belles Lettres

THE APPROACH TO SHAKESPEARE, by J. W. Mackail. *New York: The Oxford University Press. 144 pages. $2.50.*

A somewhat revised version of the lectures given at University College, London, under the auspices of the Lord Northcliffe Foundation. Some mild degree of attention is given Shakespeare's relation to the stage and a certain amount of note taken of recent developments in Shakespearean scholarship and research. The main intention of the book, however, concerns the reader and his approach to Shakespeare as a poet and dramatist who is to be felt and loved. After chapters on the general subject—the decade of the comedies, for instance, and the decade of the tragedies—the book ends with a discussion of Shakespeare's artistry and Shakespeare's world.

SHAKESPEARE'S PROBLEM COMEDIES, by William Witherle Lawrence. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 258 pages. $3.*

Professor Lawrence of Columbia University, hitherto known for his medieval studies, here deals with the familiar problem of the so-called "gloomy" comedies of Shakespeare: "Measure for Measure," "Troilus and Cressida" and "All's Well That Ends Well." He attempts to solve certain perplexing questions concerning Shakespeare's art by a consideration of the dramatist's inheritance from earlier times. In a way that will interest the general reader as well as the scholar, he treats these three comedies in terms of the audience for which they were written. Professor Lawrence also discusses their relation to Shakespeare's other plays and to the literary and social changes of his day.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, by E. K. Chambers. *New York: The Oxford University Press. Two vols. 1,024 pages. $15.*

In these volumes Professor Chambers completes the design that appeared in his "Elizabethan Stage"; the central figure of that stage now has ample treatment. This new work presents an immense amount of data, sources, notations, interpretations, a fullness of record and comment that is as necessary as it is welcome, exact and useful wherever the study of Shakespeare is undertaken. The chapters deal with Shakespeare's origin, the stage of his first theater years, his company, the publication of plays in that time, the Quarto and the First Folio, the questions of authenticity and chronology, and almost every other aspect of the Shakespearean field. One of the most complete and accessible stores of information provided is that under the heading of "The Shakespeare Mythos," full of details as to the earliest mentions of him or his works. Among twenty-six others during the first century after Shakespeare's death in 1616 are that of Richard James, nine years after, who speaks of a young lady who, upon reading Shakespeare's works, had asked a question concerning Falstaff; and that of Lieutenant Hammond (1634), who has traveled past Stratford-on-Avon and seen "the neat monument of that famous English Poet, Mr. William Shakespeare; who was borne here."

Public Affairs

A STUDY OF THE PRINCIPLES OF POLITICS, by George E. G. Catlin. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 469 pages. $6.*

The attempt begun, at least in part, in the author's "Science and Methods of Politics," to place politics in a position to consider problems of government independently of the larger considerations of ethics and sociology, or even psychology, is developed in this treatise. The readable and learned account sets forth the implications of dealing with the individual will as discovered always projecting itself in a social group and never in isolation, when the vexing questions of liberty and authority, conflict and solidarity, convention and individual activity, are considered. Whatever may seem to be the impossibilities of ranging the study of government along with the stricter sciences, the departure of this book from the traditional method of studying the nature of government is always provocative and perhaps fruitful.

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THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VIEWS OF MR. JUSTICE BRANDEIS, collected by Alfred Lief, with a foreword by Charles A. Beard. *New York: The Vanguard Press. 425 pages. $4.50.*

Extracts from the opinions and other writings of Mr. Justice Brandeis, showing recognition not only of legal precedents but of "the logic of realities"; showing, too, courage to dissent and, sometimes, an agreeable terseness—as in "men feared witches and burned women." Mr. Justice Brandeis, looked at as dangerous by some conservatives in 1916, is, it seems, not far from, if not of, the belief he attributes to the Congress that passed the Sherman Act, "that the desire to acquire and to enjoy property is the safest and most promising basis for society."

THE WORLD'S ECONOMIC DILEMMA, by Ernest Patterson. *New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. 323 pages. $3.50.*

To Professor Patterson the world's economic dilemma consists in the fact that international life is organized almost exclusively along national lines, but that national economic welfare can be advanced only by international coöperation. He devotes much attention to the population question, as well as to the results of large-scale production and of the economic activities of governments. In the final section he describes some economic problems of the leading nations of the world. The book is difficult to read and apparently lacking in unity. It contains, however, much valuable material upon a very timely subject.

Fiction

THE JEALOUS GHOST, by L. A. G. Strong. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.*

An American, proud of his origins, goes on a pilgrimage to the West Highland home of his ancestors with the intention of paying his debt to the past, and then discovers it to be a displanted ghost hovering jealously and insubstantially over the beauty and fullness of the present—the lives that have succeeded to its heritage. The ghost is laid, and he goes away again. Mr. Strong's theme is a tenuous one and breaks down now and again under the weight of extended treatment, even though the treatment is subtle and deserving of considerable praise.

A JEW IN LOVE, by Ben Hecht. *New York: Covici-Friede. $2.50.*

A psychiatrist would probably say that what was wrong with Mr. Hecht's thirty-year-old Jewish millionaire was dementia precox in a pronounced but not particularly complicated form, and would let it go at that. Mr. Hecht, however, has a sneaking admiration for his hero—who his model was is not hard to guess—and makes of him an obnoxious, rather pitiable little bounder with a sex obsession, as muddled in his love making as in his thinking. The portrait has the accuracy, if not the clarity, of a pathological case history.

Contributors

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLAIN is identified in the present issue by a note preceding his article on Russia.

DOROTHY TYLER is a young poet of Detroit, Michigan.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON has nearly completed his biography of Rousseau, which Harcourt, Brace will issue within the next few months.

BENJAMIN GINZBURG is the author of "The Adventure of Science" and a frequent contributor to literary and philosophic journals.

PAUL ROSENFELD, the well known critic of music and painting, is at work on his second novel.

JOHN HODGDON BRADLEY, JR., is the author of "Parade of the Living," which Coward McCann published last autumn.

ALLEN TATE, who lives in Tennessee, was one of the contributors to the symposium, "I'll Take My Stand."

WILLIAM TROY contributes articles and reviews to various publications.

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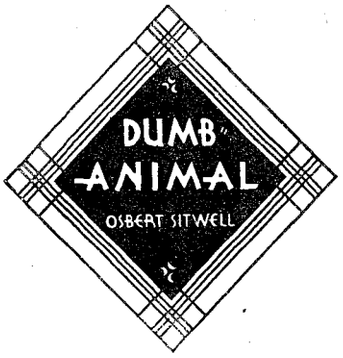

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"Growing Pains; Anderson, Bromfield."

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